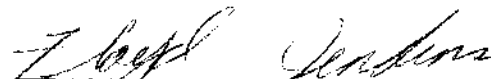



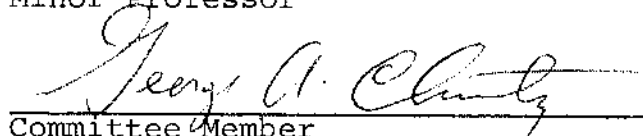
MODERN PROBLEMS AND PRACTICES OF MANAGEMENT AS  
REVEALED IN SELECTED CONTEMPORARY  
AMERICAN NOVELS

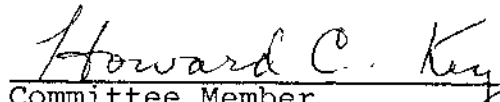
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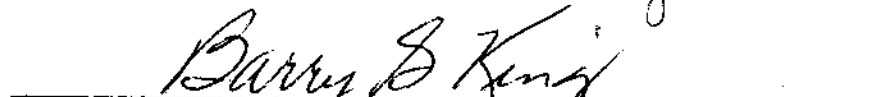
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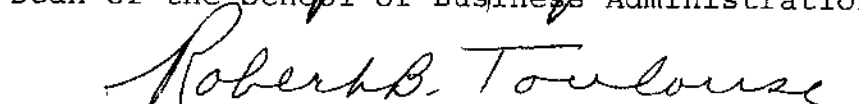
  
Major Professor

  
Minor Professor

  
Committee Member

  
Committee Member

  
Dean of the School of Business Administration

  
Dean of the Graduate School

Ashley, Janelle C., Modern Problems and Practices of Management as Revealed in Selected Contemporary American Novels. Doctor of Philosophy (Management), May, 1972. 195 pp., 1 illustration, bibliography, 157 titles.

This study is an examination of the hypothesis that selected contemporary American novels offer vivid illustrations of modern problems and practices of management as seen in business and industry. Too often, university management courses treat management processes as isolated cases in limited and static settings. Novelists, on the other hand, treat these same processes in a broader context and often deal quite subtly and perceptively with everything from the mammoth corporation to the single proprietorship. Students proposing to become businessmen, therefore, should benefit from this novelistic perspective so frequently overlooked.

The dissertation is divided into four chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and defines its aim and scope. Chapter Two is devoted to a review of historical novels about businessmen and related criticism. Novelists rather than novels serve as the basis for selection in Chapter Two. Novelists chosen are those adjudged by critics to have a secure claim to a place in American realist history. The specific works analyzed are selected from those authors most

often cited by reputable critics as illustrating the American businessman in fiction.

Chapter Three contains the major analysis of the dissertation. In this section thirteen novels with publication dates from 1949 to 1968 are analyzed in detail. The novels chosen are those in which the plot revolves primarily around some business activity. Artistic merit is not absolutely germane to the present study; therefore, works by writers of both marginal and critical fiction are included in this section. Basic management texts and scholarly articles provide the source material for the management tenets presented.

The final chapter is devoted to summary, conclusions, implications, areas for further research, and noted trends.

Both the review of related literature and the analysis of the thirteen contemporary American novels offer less to support the major hypothesis than expected. The conclusion is drawn, therefore, that a student should not study selected, contemporary American novels if his primary objective is to experience vicariously problems and practices of management.

The student can benefit technically by reading fiction drawn from a selected group of contemporary American novels concerned with business affairs, however. Though he may experience vicariously only few problems and practices of management, he can derive other benefits which would make his reading of business novels valuable to him. Most importantly,

his interest in business management is stimulated as he observes the business organization in its total environment with all the interdependencies which are continually present. And the student is compelled to engage in some introspection concerning his own philosophy of management when he sees the contemporary novelists probe such areas as the social responsibility of the businessman.

MODERN PROBLEMS AND PRACTICES OF MANAGEMENT AS REVEALED  
IN SELECTED CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN NOVELS

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the  
North Texas State University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Janelle C. Ashley, B. B. A., M. A.

Denton, Texas

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

#### Statement of Problem

This dissertation examines a selected group of contemporary American novels in an attempt to explore the hypothesis that these novels offer vivid illustrations of modern problems and practices of management as seen in business and industry.

#### Justification

Analytical, ambitious students of business usually turn to the reading of fiction only for entertainment. For information and insight into the world of business they seek such sources as The Wall Street Journal and news and trade periodicals; and they value highly a rich history of practical experience in the business environment.

Pragmatic education notwithstanding, there may be much fresh and rewarding insight into business activity to be found in current fiction concerned with business affairs. Skilled writers of the novel, with the primary intent of entertaining, often deal quite subtly and perceptively with everything from the mammoth corporation to the single proprietorship. In an interesting and concrete fashion, the novelists treat managerial functions in a broader context

than business courses. An isolated case in a limited and often static setting is too often the picture the student of management sees in his course work. Students proposing to become businessmen, therefore, should benefit from this novelistic perspective so frequently overlooked.

Several business administration courses might include some reading of fiction as a supplement to textbook assignments. By vicariously experiencing business problems and practices through the reading of pertinent novels, the student could add an extra dimension to his studies. In addition to stimulating interest in the fields of business and management, the novelist might provide the impetus for some critical introspection and value seeking on the part of the student. It even is possible that in some programs of education for business, a complete course in literature with business applications could be installed.

#### Definition of Terms

Businessman as used in this study refers to an individual engaged in any one or several of the following activities:

- (1) the purchase or sale of commodities or in related financial transactions,
- (2) the exchange and transportation of commodities,
- (3) the manufacturing or processing of commodities, and
- (4) the operation of public carriers, such as railroads, ships, bus lines, and air lines.

Notably excluded from the study are men in professions such as theology, law, medicine, and education. Those individuals engaged in the administrative duties of a profession, however, are considered businessmen for the purposes of this study.

Management is defined as the coordination of human, financial, and material resources through the processes of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling to achieve stated objectives.

#### Scope and Structure

The attempt to locate and examine illustrations of management problems and practices in American fiction appears never to have been done. An extensive search through Dissertation Abstracts and other relevant bibliographies indicates no similar study.

Some research has been conducted, however, on a closely related topic, "The American Businessman in Fiction." A review of this related area reveals at once that writings by literary critics concerning the American businessman in fiction have been quite limited. These writings, nevertheless, serve as background material for the more specialized topic of management practices.

A point of much concern in the critical articles appears to be whether or not the businessman has been treated as a

villain by literary artists. Though the critics disagree on this issue, they apparently agree that superior literary artists who have dealt with the businessman emphasize social and cultural ills related to business rather than business organization. Early novels such as Babbitt by Sinclair Lewis The Pit and The Octopus by Frank Norris, and The Jungle by Upton Sinclair are well known for their portrayals of nefarious business activity. Reference to modern management practices and problems, on the other hand, are more abundant in recent novels. For this reason, only novels written after 1949 are examined in detail for pertinent illustrations.

The older novels, however, provide enlightening background material for the present study, and seven novels are examined in a rather cursory fashion. These novels have publication dates from 1873 to 1930. No study of this nature would be complete without some mention of the Horatio Alger series. Though none of the Alger books are analyzed, a brief comment is made on the reception of these novels by the critics and on the importance and effect of the Alger series on the image of the businessman.

Novelists rather than novels serve as the basis for selection in this early section. The analysis is restricted to those novelists whom critics have accorded a secure claim to a place in the history of American realism. The works are selected from those authors most often cited by reputable critics as illustrating the American businessman in fiction.

The main part of this study is based upon thirteen contemporary American novels examined in detail. The novels are those in which the plot revolves primarily around some business activity. Artistic merit is not absolutely germane to the present study, and it can therefore be candidly admitted that only about half of the authors considered have won wide critical acclaim.

Novels from authors like Arthur Hailey and Cameron Hawley fall more nearly into the category Van R. Halsey calls "marginal literature" (5, p. 392). Halsey sees the author of marginal literature or popular fiction as one who "portrays rather accurately the day-to-day realities of the market place" (5, p. 401) and demonstrates "a rather broad, if at times superficial, knowledge of the everyday realities of business" (5, p. 396). Though from a philosophical and artistic standpoint Halsey's writer of "critical fiction" who "explores the psychological and moral ramifications of experience" (5, p. 402) may prove more significant in the future, for the purposes of this study the marginal writer has an equally important place in that he is often quite familiar with technical details and situations instructive to the business student. Selections for this chapter, therefore, are made from among the writers of both "marginal" and "critical" fiction.

The treatment of each novel begins with a brief comment concerning the life and writings of the novelist followed by a summary of the content and an evaluation of the novel by literary critics. The unique contribution of the dissertation, however, begins at the point where each novel is carefully examined for relevant illustrations of management problems and practices which could supplement a student's understanding of the management process. There is no attempt to include all pertinent illustrations from each novel nor to offer situations depicting each of the management processes. Sample aspects of management have been chosen first for the frequency and clarity with which they have been presented in a novel and second for the variety of business situations so that the scope as well as the depth of treatment can be ascertained.

When appropriate, illustrations of managerial practices from each novel are conveniently organized and discussed under the basic processes of management including planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. At the point of discussion the specific practice or authoritative opinion involved is briefly noted. The above categories of managerial functions will be used, when applicable, in the discussion of each novel.

Planning is ordinarily considered the most basic of management functions (7, p. 71). It depends upon the existence of alternatives and involves the selection from among

these alternatives of future courses of action. The setting of goals and objectives is an essential part of the planning process along with a determination of ways of reaching these goals and objectives. It is, in the final analysis, the "task of planning to minimize risk while taking advantage of opportunities" (7, p. 72).

Organizing is basically a process of division. It involves "dividing all the work that has to be accomplished and assigning it to individuals, groups, and departments" (2, p. 148). This includes the establishment of authority relationships and areas of responsibility between supervisor and subordinate and among the various levels of supervision. The concept of organization also entails the problems associated with the informal organization, the friction which often arises between line and staff officials, and the use of various forms of group management.

"Staffing is the executive function which encompasses the recruitment, selection, training, promotion, and retirement of subordinate managers" (7, p. 396). The specialized field of personnel management is primarily concerned with the staffing function although personnel management functions or processes must be performed within any company whether a specialized personnel department exists or not. Personnel texts usually refer to staffing processes as those actions which "contribute to the procurement, development, utilization,

and maintenance of the work force that is to be managed" (3, p. 10).

Of particular current interest in the area of staffing is the growing concern over psychological testing evidenced in part by books of authors like Banesh Hoffmann, Martin L. Gross, William H. Whyte, Jr., and Jacques Barzun (6, 4, 9, 1). These authors are particularly fearful that such tests breed conformity. More recent studies attack the tests for apparent cultural biases.

Directing, according to Massie, is the "heart of the managerial process because it is involved with initiating action" (8, p. 74). Effective communication is essential in direction as the issuing of orders constitutes a significant element of the process. Varying styles of leadership, motivation of employees, and systems of reward and punishment are further areas of concern associated with directing.

The control function of management, though most often listed last of the five processes, is inextricably linked with the planning function. This becomes evident if one examines the following definition: "Control implies measurement of accomplishment against the standard and the correction of deviations to assure attainment of objectives according to plan" (7, p. 535). Advanced techniques of control such as PERT (Program Evaluation and Review Technique) are actually no more than improved planning techniques with the essential component, feedback.



### Preview of Presentation

The subject at hand quite naturally falls into the following categories: (1) aim and scope of research, (2) historical development, (3) individual novels examined, (4) conclusions.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE BUSINESSMAN IN AMERICAN FICTION: A REVIEW OF HISTORICAL NOVELS ABOUT BUSINESSMEN AND RELATED CRITICISM

American novels published before 1949 and named in bibliographies under the caption "business" are abundant. A quick review of these works indicates two major characteristics: first, the novels do not deal with business as business. The major character simply has an occupation which today might be dignified by the cognomen "business"; second, though the businessman may be introduced in his commercial setting, he is quickly removed from it. The novels become, therefore, character studies of Americans with a bent for making money, often without regard for the cost to others. The emphasis, therefore, falls on social and cultural ills which the authors relate to business.

There are then few, if any, illustrations of current management practices and problems in earlier novels, but these early forays have to be looked at as background material for what now can be recognized as the business novel.

Forerunner of American Business Novel--  
Horatio Alger Series, 1956-1910

Born in 1832, the son of a Unitarian minister, Horatio Alger, Jr. has been called the greatest selling author of all time. His bibliographer reports that more copies of Alger books have been sold than of any author who ever lived (13, p. 11). Before his death at the age of sixty-seven, Alger had written 135 books which sold close to 200,000,000 copies, according to an objective, authoritative study (3, p. vi).

Though an ordained Unitarian minister, himself, and a religious man throughout his life, Alger wrote what one critic calls "a collection of literary museum-pieces . . . completely devoid of literary style . . . [which] reflect truth no more accurately than a Coney Island mirror" (3, p. vi). Alger's juvenile stories nevertheless had great attraction for boys, many of whom read these novels in their youth, became successful businessmen, and gave Alger "at least partial credit for their success" (13, p. 11).

Alger's hero, whether his name is Ragged Dick, Phil the Fiddler, or Nelson the Newsboy, is always the same--a poor, honest, manly, cheerful, and ambitious paragon. He does not drink, smoke, gamble, or waste his time and money at the theatre. And though he starts at the bottom, he always ends at the top.

In explaining the success of the series, Russel Crouse credits the era in which the books were published:

It was an era in which America was just beginning to find its potentialities. The resources were there. They had to be developed--and in their development America became great. Many of the men who developed them may have found their inspiration in Horatio Alger--in his adoration of achievement (3, p. viii).

Frank Gruber points out another aspect of his achievement:

Nowhere in contemporary fiction, nowhere in the histories of New York City, can one obtain a better picture of life in New York in the second half of the nineteenth century, than by a perusal of the books of Horatio Alger, Jr. Alger wrote of the cash boys in the department stores, the seamstresses toiling in lofts or tenements. He tells you of life on the streets, the bustling throngs of City Hall Square, the muddy crossings of Broadway, the stage coaches and horse cars, the squalid Bowery saloons. He wrote of life on the streets, in the shops and factories and he wrote of life in the great homes of the rich, where he visited. You can get a more vivid picture of New York during the golden half century following the Civil War, than through any other books known to us today (13, p. 26).

Though it would be difficult to classify the books of the Alger series with any of the business-type of novels to follow, they did much to popularize the businessman generally and improve his image with a large, if indiscriminating, sector of the American public.

#### Emergence of American Business Novel-- Post Civil War Era

The interest in business and businessmen as fictional material did not develop until after the Civil War. But as Lawrence Stessin notes, "A novelist seeking material to record

the age had to suffer from a severe case of literary myopia to miss the high drama of the world of business of the post Civil War era." Despite the burgeoning of many giant industries, the businessman as hero appeared "still a primitive" (30, p. 282). He is characterized mainly as coarse and vulgar. When not an outright crook, he always places money and material values above all others unless or until some sweet, innocent female reforms or rescues him. American women of the later nineteenth century took most seriously their role as guardians of the hearth and home.

Twain and Warner--The Gilded Age:  
A Tale of Today

The collaboration of Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner on The Gilded Age, according to Marvin Felheim, grew out of a challenge by the wives of the two men to write a work better than those popular at the time. The Gilded Age was the first novel that either Twain or Warner had attempted; and they completed it in three months. Twain wrote thirty-five chapters and Warner, twenty-eight. The final result, critic Felheim considers "an important document of its age as well as an impressive, if flawed, satirical novel" (6, pp. vii-x).

Colonel Beriah Sellers, the Hawkins clan, and Senator Dilworthy are protagonists and bear the brunt of heavy criticism directed toward land speculators, businessmen, and

politicians who lust for land, money, and power at the expense of people who after the Civil War want to go west. Speculation, particularly in land, embroils the entire nation. Those with capital are anxious to invest; those with credit and dreams overextend themselves; and those with schemes exploit their neighbors. Every institution from the church to the newspaper seems corruptible. The following comment from Chapter Twenty-six keynotes the temper of the time:

Beautiful credit! The foundation of modern society. Who shall say that this is not the golden age of mutual trust, of unlimited reliance upon human promises? That is a peculiar condition of society which enables a whole nation to instantly recognize point and meaning in the familiar newspaper anecdote, which puts into the mouth of a distinguished speculator in lands and mines this remark:--'I wasn't worth a cent two years ago, and now I owe two million of dollars' (31, p. 193).

Through comedy, farce, and satire, the authors present an amusing version of a dynamic period in the history of the United States. "Although some contemporary reviewers protested against caricature and exaggeration in the novel," Smith points out, "the prevalent opinion then and subsequently has been that it makes even excessive use of directly observed facts" (28, p. 98). Twain and Warner's characterization of the businessman as a rather speculative schemer takes hold and appears in other novels that follow The Gilded Age.

William Dean Howells--The Rise  
of Silas Lapham

The Rise of Silas Lapham is a major exception to the businessman fostered by Twain and Warner. "Literary historians still pay homage to William Dean Howells as the creator of the first non-villainous businessman," says Lawrence Stessin. Stessin goes on to point out, though, that Howells' story "is not realism but a nostalgic throw-back to the genteel tradition of New England puritanism, where virtue triumphed and villainy paid the piper's price" (30, p. 284). Even Harry T. Moore, who writes the "Afterword" for a 1963 publication of the novel, says that "Lapham under stress shows that he is not a typical capitalist of the time." Moore still refers to the work, however, as ". . . the first novel of scope and of any artistic merit to be devoted to study of an American businessman" (22, pp. 345, 338).

The Rise of Silas Lapham is in part a character study of an American businessman of the late nineteenth century, as Howells, a literary realist, conceived of him. The story opens on Lapham's interview with a newspaper reporter who is preparing a series on "Solid Men of Boston." A veteran colonel of the Civil War, Lapham has made his fortune by marketing a mineral paint discovered on the family farm by his father. Silas spends his last days in bankruptcy and



genteel poverty, lamenting his fate at the hands of financial sharpies but quite satisfied with himself as an upright, morally sound person.

As Kenneth S. Lynn, professor of literature at Harvard University, points out, "Howells passionately believed that the novelist should deal with 'reality' and that he should 'tell the truth.' In order to do so, the novelist must deal with what he knew, with his 'own experience of things' " (19, p. 119). And Professor Lynn goes on to say that Howells was almost an alien in State Street or Wall Street. His only acquaintance with business was in his post as a magazine editor. True to his convictions, therefore, Howells initiated his story of Silas Lapham in the office, quickly exhausted what he knew about the business world there, and just as quickly "sent Silas home." In abandoning the office, moreover, Howells moved from a business novel to a novel of manners (19, p. 119).

Lynn is quite correct in referring to Howells' treatment of Silas Lapham as a precedent-setting move:

By starting Silas Lapham out in the office, then rapidly escorting him away from it, Howells set a precedent almost universally followed by other novelists who wrote about businessmen in the 60-year period between the mid-1800's and the end of World War II . . . . In the process of moving away from the office, the American business novel in this period often becomes, as Silas Lapham did, a novel of manners, and the business hero ceases to be a businessman as such. What is important about the businessman in this kind of novel is not that he makes paint, or sells real estate, but that he is an American male of limited culture attempting to move in a more sophisticated world (19, pp. 119-120).

But Silas, as the businessman characterized in the novel of this period, runs true to form in more ways than one. He gets so intent upon making money and managing a business that he simply seems to have no time to consider moral and spiritual matters. In its message about Puritan morality, the book is romantic nonsense at its worst. The other shady dealers, besides Silas, are deplorably vague and unconvincing.

"Tooth and Claw" Theme Novels--  
The Early 1900's

William Dean Howells' portrait of the reformed and repentant businessman in The Rise of Silas Lapham did not set a pattern for subsequent novelists. If Howells sentimentalized Lapham's basic goodness and virtue, later novelists began casting the businessman more vigorously than ever in the role of villain--"hard, daring, ruthless . . . living by the code of the jungle" (30, p. 286). And yet, despite the change in character, the businessman was still not cast primarily in his role as a man of business. Business remained a kind of unexamined symbol of suspect activities, which novelists felt it might be bad taste or useless to display in gruesome detail.

Frank Norris and Theodore Dreiser are novelists quite well known for insistence upon the "tooth and claw" ethics of business (30, p. 286). Upton Sinclair, though best known for his muckraking journalism, has a novel, The Jungle, which also fits well in this category.

## Frank Norris--The Octopus

The Octopus is Frank Norris's first part of a proposed "trilogy of the Epic of the Wheat." The American novelist, often compared with the French writer Zola, planned to deal with the production, the distribution, and the consumption of American wheat. In The Octopus, Norris covers production, with the emphasis on the war between the wheatgrower and the railroad trusts. The Pit, the second part of the trilogy, deals with the distribution or specifically with a corner in wheat in the Chicago wheat market called "The Pit." Norris died before writing the final section of his proposed trilogy. The Wolf was planned to relate the story of a famine in Europe relieved by American wheat.

On its completion, The Octopus was hailed by critics as "a work so distinctly great that it justly entitles the author to rank among the very first American novelists" (8, p. 547). On the other hand, some critics berated Norris for the use of a method "that is essentially inartistic." One critic refers to the use of "realism" which to him means:

. . . the piling up of great masses of trivial fact, reporting in place of true characterization, and the enforcement of his argument by the bludgeon rather than by the rapier (24, p. 136).

The Octopus is the story of the struggle between the California wheat-growers and the railroad company upon which they relied for access to their market. Norris used an actual

situation, the tragic "Mussel Slough Affair." Farmers in the San Joaquin Valley of California were dispossessed by the railroad company, and several were cruelly murdered in their attempts to protect themselves and their homes.

The setting for Norris's novel is also the San Joaquin Valley. Wealthy wheat farmers, enticed by the verbal promise of the railroad to sell them land at a price based on the value of the land without improvements, developed thousands of acres of land to which they held no title. Not only did the railroad ultimately demand a price for the land which would be ruinous to the wheat farmers, but the railroads also engaged in almost every other conceivable act of aggression, including outrageous freight charges.

In the San Joaquin setting, where the farmers resist eviction to the bloody end, and in scenes set in San Francisco, involving among others Shelgrim, the powerful president of the Pacific and Southwestern, Norris details the conflict which transpires between the trusts and the people. He includes two love stories--one of Vanamee and Angele Varian and the other between Buck Annixter and Hilma Tree; and Norris vividly relates the story of Magnus Derrick and his two sons, one of whom Magnus disowns because of his betrayal of the people. S. Behrman, characterized as the efficient and soulless tool of the railroad corporation, is literally suffocated by wheat he stole from honest industry.

All in all, Norris has brilliantly characterized a painful period in the industrialization of America; but as noted previously, he has dealt more with social and cultural ills related to business than with business organization. And a final interesting criticism is expressed well in the following comment by a reviewer of Norris's day:

. . . we think that Mr. Norris has shown himself too evidently a partisan of the agriculturist, and has failed to deal impartially with the forces that contend for mastery in his pages. If only he had given the devil his due, we might be willing to admit the diabolic character of the corporation which he assails; as it is, we are rather inclined to sympathize with the octopus, which stands, after all, for practices that come within the form of law, whereas the practices of the wheat-growers stand for the most part without the law, and illustrate nearly every form of violence and anarchy (24, p. 136).

#### Theodore Dreiser--The Titan

Like Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser writes more of the bad social aspects of business than of business organization itself. Also, like Norris, Dreiser planned a trilogy to be called a "trilogy of desire." The first segment, The Financier, introduces Frank Algernon Cowperwood whose exploits in love and finance are continued in The Titan. The final and least effective part of the trilogy, The Stoic, rounds out Cowperwood's career with the development of the London Tube.

Unlike Norris and Upton Sinclair, however, Dreiser is not completely out of sympathy with his hero, despite Cowperwood's frequent association with monopoly, graft, bribery and

corruption. "And I," Dreiser is reported as saying, "was dreaming of love and power too" (21, p. 130). From this and similar comments, Matthiessen observes:

. . . his emphasis upon the facts he had observed was significantly different from the emphasis of the muck-rakers . . . .So much attraction to what he also disapproves is very different from the incisive critical judgment of Myers or the heartfelt denunciations of Upton Sinclair (21, pp. 130-131).

Henry Nash Smith calls Dreiser's trilogy about Frank Cowperwood "the most impressive portrait of a big businessman in American fiction." And he goes on to say that "in characterizing Cowperwood, Dreiser has in the main simply taken over the familiar catalogue of the businessman's vices and presented them as virtues." Smith also points out that "virtually all Dreiser's allusions to morals carry the express or implied charge of hypocrisy. He contrasts 'the cold political logic of a man like Cowperwood' with 'the polite moralistic efforts' of the silk-stocking crowd, 'who were content to preach morality and strive to win by the efforts of the unco good'" (28, pp. 99-101).

The prototype for Cowperwood, according to F. O. Matthiessen, was Charles T. Yerkes. Dreiser explains this by saying that he "had looked into the careers of twenty American capitalists and that Yerkes was the most interesting of them." Cowperwood, however, was merely sketched from Yerkes, not mechanically copied (21, pp. 128-131).

Toward the end of The Financier, Frank Cowperwood finds himself in prison, where he has stayed for about a year. The Titan picks up his life following his release from confinement. Instead of returning to Philadelphia, Frank moves on to Chicago, taking with him his mistress, Aileen Burke, whom he soon marries.

The adventures in vice with both women and money fill the remaining pages of the novel. Cowperwood gains a monopoly of the street railways, builds a loop, manipulates holding companies after piling one corporation on top of another, and extends his franchises by "fixing" the state legislature. In the end, however, Cowperwood's financial empire collapses; and of his Titan Dreiser says "In Retrospect":

Rushing like a great comet to the zenith, his path a blazing trail, Cowperwood did for the hour illuminate the terrors and wonders of individuality. But for him also the eternal equation--the pathos of the discovery that even giants are but pygmies, and that an ultimate balance must be struck (5, p. 541).

Dreiser does paint an impressive portrait. He does not; on the other hand, deal very much with business organization. Alfred Kazin vividly summarizes Dreiser's skill at portraiture in the following words taken from his introduction to The Titan:

Dreiser was an artist who operated with the facts of a new era because he saw them as instruments of human destiny. He saw man, man naked as he essentially is, playing with skyscrapers, trains, stocks and bonds, the costumes that man wears in our time. Only and imagination which can see the circumstances of life as

as significant accidents, which can portray the vulnerability of the human person under the pressure of social fact, can really portray the limited but unmistakable area of determinism within which we operate (17, p. 9).

A striking parallel to the work of Dreiser in The Titan may be seen in Sherwood Anderson's short novel, Poor White. Hugh McVey is a "poor white" Lincolnesque inventor whose story is set in Bidwell, Ohio, rather than Frank Cowperwood's Chicago. But like Dreiser on a smaller scale, Anderson relates the ideas, events, and atmosphere that shape the beginnings of an industrial era. He reveals the conflicts which arise when a man must decide between his desires for material prosperity and his sense of personal ethics. And like Dreiser and Frank Norris too, Sherwood Anderson portrays the disillusionments and inner aridity man faces when he allows his materialistic desires to dominate his entire being. In "Gullible's Travels" and other stories, Ring Lardner offers a similar theme through overt satire.

#### Upton Sinclair--The Jungle

The Jungle is worthy of a place by the side of Frank Norris' greatest work, The Octopus. These two works have more of historic truth than many histories and they are marked by that high order of genius that compels the reader to see and feel all that man can see and feel under tragic conditions similar to those described (16, p. 652).

These words, representative of one critical faction, read quite in contrast to the reviews from the equally vehement



but opposite faction. In an article for The Dial, another critic says The Jungle is:

. . . too obviously colored for effect, too wilfully blind to the many forces for good which are steadily at work counteracting the evils whose existence we readily admit. Mr. Sinclair's horrors are not typical, and his indecencies of speech are not tolerable in any book that has claims to consideration as literature. He has evidently "got up" his case with much pains and ingenuity, but he spoils it by his excess of bias and vehemence (25, p. 262).

Dedicated to "the working men of America," The Jungle is a thinly veiled piece of Socialist propaganda. Sinclair describes in lurid detail the life and work of the humblest of the rank-and-file toiling in the packing plants of the Chicago stock yards. In substance, the book tells the story of Jurgis Rudkus, a Lithuanian immigrant who seeks his fortune in America only to find himself fleeced, from the moment he boards the steamship to America until he joins the ranks of the socialist agitators.

Through Rudkus, the reader sees the packing-houses where men, women, and children all must work to support the family. He sees the horrible conditions under which the men toil, from the killing beds to the sausage factories. He learns of the putrefaction sold by contract to the army, prisons, and even the general public disguised as potted meat. And finally, he observes everything from poisoned rats together with odds and ends of waste winding their way into the hoppers for processing as food for human beings.

Even with liberal allowances for exaggeration, the conditions described by Upton Sinclair are intolerable. The solution he proposes, however, appears rather idealistic. The novel closes with Jurgis Rudkus among the socialist agitators launching a violent tirade against the tyranny of capital and lauding the praises of a full-fledged program of socialism.

Needless to say, one can gain some valuable insights into what were brutal periods in the development of industry in the United States by reading The Jungle. Like Norris and Dreiser, however, Sinclair was intent upon stamping a vivid impression on the minds and souls of his readers; and he accomplished this end, not by probing the technical aspects of business organization, but by exposing gruesome conditions in Packingtown.

The Businessman as the "Great American Boob"--  
The 1920's and 1930's

Novelists writing after the early 1900's changed their tack abruptly. Instead of writing of the Frank Cowperwoods obedient only to "a private law--I satisfy myself" (5, pp. 28-29), novelists painted the businessman as a buffoon, a pathetic little man to be pitied and laughed at. Characters similar to George F. Babbitt from Sinclair Lewis' Babbitt and J. Ward Moorehouse from John DosPassos' The Big Money,

led to H. L. Mencken's jeering designation of the businessman as the "Great American Boob" (30, p. 286; 28, p. 103).

Sinclair Lewis--Babbitt

"Banned in Boston" would have been an appropriate title for the review of Sinclair Lewis' Babbitt appearing in the Boston Evening Transcript. "Success, or at least its popular and material equivalent, seems to have gone to Mr. Lewis's head," are the words the Boston critic uses to introduce his review. He concludes by noting, "As a humorist, Mr. Lewis makes valiant attempts to be funny; he merely succeeds in being silly . . . it is as yellow a novel as novel can be" (12, p. 1).

Most other critics (10, 7, 32), however, are highly complimentary of Lewis' effort, and their sentiments are summarized quite succinctly in the following words:

His book will be reviled from one end of this land to the other. It will be hated, spat upon, possibly burned by the common hangman. But it will be read. And it ought to be read. Not because it is brilliant, still less because it is mean, but because it attacks shams and hypocrisies and poltrooneries and dishonesties that pretty nearly every reader, if he is honest with himself, will realize that he has engaged in, directly or indirectly, at one time or another (20, p. 8).

George F. Babbitt, the real estate broker of Zenith who insists upon being called a "realtor," is the anti-hero of Lewis' pungent satire of American life of the twenties. Though Babbitt the businessman receives the brunt of the

satire, the whole pattern of American life and values is exposed to ridicule. Lewis attacks rather heavy-handedly domestic manners, marriage, relaxation, sports, bridge, movies, social stratification, and religion--to name only a few.

Essentially a character-study, Babbitt tells the story of a moderately successful businessman who lives with his wife and three children in a handsome suburban home. George Babbitt is a Presbyterian, a Republican, a Zenith Booster, an Elk, and as he calls himself, a "regular fellow." Despite his material prosperity and the external show of interest in his business, George is not a happy man. He lives with a fundamental fear. He fears his family, his friends, his business associates, and his political representatives. In certain somber moments he feels vaguely the futility of his existence. Babbitt can only muster a minor revolt against the system, though, and in the end he wistfully hopes his son, Theodore Roosevelt Babbitt, might someday be the hero that he never was and find it unnecessary to say as he ". . . practically I've never done a single thing I've wanted to in my whole life" (18, p. 319)!

With Babbitt, therefore, the American businessman begins to take on a somewhat different aspect in fiction. The helpless victim of environmental pressure, the compromising conformist replaces the ruthless giant who lived by the law

of the jungle. And this novel spawns others with a similar theme, including The Big Money by John Dos Passos.

John Dos Passos--The Big Money

The third segment of Dos Passos' ambitious U. S. A. trilogy, The Big Money continues in kaleidoscopic fashion the presentation of one slice of the pre-depression era in the United States begun in The 42nd Parallel and 1919.

The author uses four distinct methods to record this period. With straight narrative he offers the life stories of several men and women whose careers converge on or parallel one another. Between chapters he inserts a few very short biographies of actual people, influential at the time: Henry Ford, Frederick W. Taylor, and Thorstein Veblen. These historical footnotes provide oblique commentary on the life of the fictional character. Newsreels serve to reflect the temper of the times; and the "camera eye" seeks to remind the reader that all Dos Passos says is colored by his own personal experiences and observations.

Characters moving in and out of the narrative include Charley Anderson, the mechanic and war hero who gives up his profitable business to "cash-in" on some of the big money to be made in stock speculation; J. Ward Moorehouse and Richard Ellsworth Savage, the great stuffed shirts of the public relations world; Mary French, heroine of the American labor movement; and Margo Dowling, queen of the Hollywood movie screen.

The stories of these fictional characters, combined with the biographies of influential people of the time, the newsreels and camera eye, vividly portray to the reader the "boom and bust" period of the 1920's. The pace is rapid, and as Horace Gregory points out, Dos Passos

. . . has caught the reckless speed at which the big money is made, lost, wasted in America; he, more than any other living writer, has exposed to public satire those peculiar contradictions of our poverty in the midst of plenty (11, p. 1).

Maxwell Geismar, in his introduction to a 1961 edition of The Big Money, calls the work ". . . the most acerbic novel in twentieth-century American prose fiction," though he points out that Dos Passos uses a "deliberately flat tone" (9, p. ix).

In summary, Dos Passos offers in The Big Money simply another picture in the unfolding drama of the businessman in American fiction. From his minuscule role in novels prior to the Civil War, the businessman has evolved from a merchant of plunder, through a phase as a tycoonish arch-individual responsible only to his own desires, to a comprising conformist, a man to be laughed at and pitied.

The reader has yet, however, to see any complete picture of the technical side of business organization. As a result, there have been no critical studies to probe the earlier business novels for examples of technical problems of business organization. Moreover, researchers have also failed to turn

to the contemporary American novel concerned with business affairs to search for these evidences.

#### Insignificance of Previous Research Efforts for Current Study

A search through the relevant bibliographies uncovers only a very few studies which deal with the businessman and the business organization in American fiction; and these studies are of rather recent origin. The major point of concern in most of the studies is whether or not the businessman has been treated as a villain by the novelists. The critics and scholars who do not pursue this theme of villainy point out that the so called "business novel" is not really a novel about business at all but simply a novel about a character who happens to have business as a profession.

In 1948 John Chamberlain conducted an inquiry into the literary treatment accorded American businessmen in fiction. Reported in Fortune and termed by Howard R. Smith "the principal piece of work of this kind" (29, p. 265), Chamberlain's article cites 42 novels written between 1884 and 1948 to document the position that contemporary (to 1948) American novelists were treating the businessman as a villainous creature just as surely as did the writers of the deep depression years (1).

Writing in the Harvard Business Review in 1956, a professor of literature at Harvard University, Kenneth S. Lynn,

states that the purpose of his study is only incidentally to take issue with Chamberlain's hypothesis. His main focus is upon "literary solutions to the problem of dealing with the businessman as hero" (19, p. 116).

Lynn concedes that some novels and plays of the post-World War II era cast the businessman in "as unflattering a light as was ever trained upon him in the past." He goes on to point out, however, that two of the most important business novels of the 1940's fail to fit Chamberlain's anti-business bias. Here he refers to F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Last Tycoon and Theodore Dreiser's The Bulwark. By 1956 Lynn feels "the extraordinary spate of business fiction in recent years has been increasingly sympathetic with the aims and problems of the businessman." The basic point on which he concludes, though, is that the businessman in his role as a businessman has never really been dealt with at all in the literature (19, pp. 117-118).

Two significant articles were published in 1959 concerning the businessman in the American novel. Howard R. Smith of the University of Georgia authors one article for The Southern Economic Journal; Van R. Halsey of Amherst College writes for the American Quarterly.

The purpose of Smith's study is to determine how accurately the following propositions describe the characterizations of businessmen by America's ranking realist novelists"



1. At least until very recent times the businessman has consistently been portrayed in the American novel as a villain.
2. The American novelist in thus portraying the businessman has revealed himself to be:
  - a. Frighteningly malevolent;
  - b. Snobbishly aristocratic;
  - c. Openly socialistic;
  - d. Painfully unrealistic; and
  - e. Overwhelmingly nonvocational in orientation (29, pp. 274-275).

Smith is much concerned with methodology in his study. He chooses to consider only "novelists adjudged by critics to have a secure claim to a place in American realist history" in order to limit his study to novels of those individuals who have accepted the obligation to write of situations which are "true to life." In addition, Smith expands his bibliography to include all of the novels published by each author he considers. The importance he attaches to this requirement is evident in the following:

. . . surely it is reasonable to assert that the portraiture of one or more businessmen as 'villainous' by an author takes on an entirely different set of implications if it develops that this same author places dentists, engineers, carpenters, and school teachers in the same category . . . . The way a novelist deals with any particular segment of his material derives from his philosophy of life, which is what in the final analysis he is really endeavoring to get across (29, p. 268).

In a lengthy analysis, Smith disproves all the hypotheses except one: that the American novelist in portraying the businessman has revealed himself to be overwhelmingly non-vocational in orientation. On this point Smith goes on to

say, however, that "It can readily be demonstrated that business as a profession is not discriminated against from this standpoint; the vocational settings of the other kinds of people are as little developed by American realist novelists as is the business environment of businessmen" (29, p. 289).

Professor Smith concludes his study by calling attention to the pessimistic outlook of the majority of writers, particularly during the period between the two major world wars and further states:

And on the side of businessmen it is readily understandable why there has been so much misunderstanding and apprehension about the fictionalization of businessmen . . . . Because they are, as a class, promoters of socio-economic evolution on a gigantic scale, they would of course be inclined to take personally attacks on the new social order they have done so much to bring into being. However, despite this understandable self-consciousness, the fact remains that quality novelists in the American realist tradition have not singled out businessmen as primary moral agents in a process of civilizational deterioration (29, pp. 300-301).

Writing for the American Quarterly in 1959, Van R. Halsey provides "an examination of American business fiction during the past half-century seen against the backdrop of some recent statistical and interpretive studies of the businessmen." He sees "literature as an expression of the culture within which it is created," and refers to literature as one of the basic tools which can be used in examining the social history of that culture. His questions are, "What sort of picture of the

culture does the writer draw and how reliable is that picture?" (14, p. 391).

Basic to Halsey's study is a division of business fiction into two categories. On one side are novels written by outstanding and well known American writers. Halsey refers in this instance to such writers as Dreiser and Marquand, and notes that "The authors are spoken of as social critics and, almost without exception since before the turn of the century their novels have been attacks on business values and the businessman." These writers Professor Halsey refers to as authors of "critical fiction." The second category he calls "marginal literature." Halsey says that there are dozens of marginal novels for every one critical novel. The marginal work, though much more favorable in its treatment of business, is designed for the mass market. "But because they are poor novels, poorly executed," Halsey continues, "they never achieve a permanent place in the annals of American literature, and five months after publication, copies of most of them can only be discovered in the Library of Congress or at remainder sales" (14, p. 392).

After examining all the business fiction in three periods at twenty-five year intervals beginning in 1900, Halsey cites three areas of difference between the two bodies of literature: "The biographical data, and status in the business institution of the major figures; the description of actual mechanical

details of the business and the hero's values in conflict with the business ideology." In all three areas he finds the writer of the marginal fiction portraying reality in a more accurate fashion (14, pp. 393-394).

"The final point of difference, the author's treatment of conflict and its resolution," Halsey feels, "is precisely the area which in most cases determines the literary fate of the story or novel." The marginal writers handle stereotyped characters and situations in a routine way, and it is no difficult matter to predict how matters will turn out. The writers of critical fiction, on the other hand, "achieve their strength and assure their novels a prominent place in the literary histories by their deft and perceptive handling of complicated personalities caught in conflicts which have no easy solution" (14, p. 394).

The writer of critical fiction often has fundamental opposition to the business ideology, which is--as Halsey notes--concerned with the practical, material aspects of life. By attacking the businessman at his most vulnerable points, therefore, the novelist has found an outlet for his hostility. Such emphasis on the vulnerable spots results, however, in an overemphasis on perjorative aspects and gives a distorted concept of the businessman. Halsey concludes, "For these reasons, then, and in spite of the value of their work, the great writers of this century have created a collective portrait of

the businessman which is less accurate than that of the writers of popular fiction" (14, p. 400).

Two other notable articles have appeared during the decade of the sixties. Lawrence Stessin in The Literary Review in 1969 discusses the fictional theme, "businessman as villain." His major conclusion is that despite the fact that "almost every calling has had its hero in fiction . . . imaginative literature has been harsh on the businessman." Whereas the villain in early business fiction was the unscrupulous businessman, the villain today is more likely to be the conformity-demanding corporation (30).

Henry Nash Smith comes to the same basic conclusions as Stessin and Halsey:

Twentieth-century American novels about business have identified a number of moral dilemmas inherent in a capitalist system, but they have not produced a character properly described as a capitalist hero . . . . Serious novelists of our day have not even attempted to consider the possibly heroic traits and accomplishments of the businessman . . . . The search for a capitalist hero has thus led to no viable results, and there is little indication that it will be more successful in the future. For the stereotypes used by the popular novelists cannot sustain a character of real imaginative substance, and serious writers seem unable to take an interest in a system of values based on economic assumptions (28, pp. 111-112).

In summary, no thorough, critical research has been done to determine how well novelists have understood the technical aspects of the business world. The entire range of study has been thus far moralistic. The only point made is that marginal

or popular fiction is more likely than critical fiction to portray accurately the technicalities of the business organization and environment. Recognition of this lack in major novels justifies, for the purpose at hand, the inclusion of several so-called "marginal novels."

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### CHAPTER III

#### CONTEMPORARY NOVELISTS' REVELATIONS OF MODERN PROBLEMS AND PRACTICES OF MANAGEMENT

The businessman in American fiction has taken a long stride forward since his miniscule role in novels prior to the Civil War. He survived the early post-war years when cast as a merchant of plunder, coarse and vulgar, with no virtues whatsoever. He saw himself first pictured as a person of virtuous possibilities in William Dean Howell's The Rise of Silas Lapham, but then suffered a reversal as the "tooth and claw theme" novels flourished during and following a period of rapid economic growth toward the end of the nineteenth century. And finally, just prior to the drought of business novels which came during the late 1930's and early 1940's, the businessman saw himself portrayed as a clown, a buffon--Mencken's "Great American Boob."

With John Marquand's publication of Point of No Return in 1949, the first novel analyzed in this chapter, business novels began to take a new turn. Whereas the villain in the earlier novels was frequently the tyrannical businessman who lived by the law of the jungle, the villain in the contemporary novel is more often the fleshless corporation demanding total conformity from its members. Despite this recurrent theme, many

contemporary American novels are now beginning to consider actual, present-day problems and practices of management. The following novels are examined in an attempt to explore this hypothesis.

Considered in chronological order of publication, the novels with the fewest illustrations of business practices come first. Two novels, Seize the Day, by Saul Bellow, and The Winter of Our Discontent, by John Steinbeck, are exceptions considered together to conclude the chapter. Neither of these novels offers any material to support the hypothesis that writers are beginning to focus upon business technique. Both Bellow and Steinbeck can be accurately described as writers of "critical fiction," who deal less effectively than the "marginal writers" with technical details and situations of interest to the business student.

The treatment of each novel begins with a brief comment concerning the life and writings of the novelist. Then comes a summary of the content followed by the evaluation of the novel by literary critics. The unique feature of the study at hand, however, begins at the point where each novel is carefully examined for relevant illustrations of management problems and practices a description of which might supplement a student's understanding of the management process. It is obviously not only impossible but unnecessary to include all pertinent illustrations from each novel or to offer situations

depicting each of the management processes. The samples presented have been chosen for the frequency with which they occur in the novels, for the clarity of presentation and for variety.

### Point of No Return

#### About the Author

One of the best known of the contemporary writers considered in this study, John Phillips Marquand has very little in his background of actual business experience. For one year he worked in a national advertising agency--"and hated doing it" (11, p. 572). But to save \$400 to sustain him while writing his first novel, Marquand "extolled O'Sullivan Heels, Lifebuoy, and a hard overall for J. Walter Thompson" (124, p. 11).

Marquand has written magazine stories and serials for most of the popular journals and early in his career was "pigeonholed into the file marked 'successful slick author'" (11, p. 573).

In 1938 Marquand aimed at "better fiction," however, and won the Pulitzer Prize for The Late George Apley. Among his other novels are Haven's End; Wickford Point; H. M. Pulham, Esquire; So Little Time; Repent in Haste; B. F.'s Daughter; and the one considered in this study, Point of No Return.

Following the 1949 publication of Point of No Return and before his death at the age of sixty-six in 1960, Marquand completed two additional novels, Melville Goodwin, U. S. A. and Sincerely, Willis Wayde.

#### Summary of Novel Content

Charles Gray, World War II veteran and an assistant vice-president of the conservative Stuyvesant Bank on Fifth Avenue, is the novel's protagonist--long past the point of no return.

Shuttling expertly between present and past, Marquand tells Gray's story, suggesting the possibility of a straight vice-presidency for the ambitious junior executive. The author then through flashbacks recounts Gray's boyhood in Clyde, Massachusetts. Here he lived on the second-best street in town but courted the girl who lived on the best street; he went--not to Harvard--but to Dartmouth.

Author Marquand then introduces Malcolm Bryant, a social anthropologist, to interpret the social significance of the folkways of Clyde and their effect upon the actions and life of Charles Gray. Charles's father, John Gray, is a most unforgettable character compared by critics (68, 124) with the masterly portrait of George Apley in Marquand's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel.

The Time reviewer summarizes the story quite succinctly in these words:

The story of Charley Gray is the story of millions of decent, middle-class U. S. citizens who are doing well, have a fire in their heels to do still better, and in their thoughtful moments suffer a fugitive feeling of discontentment from start to finish (106, p. 104).

### Opinions of Literary Critics

Most critics hail Point of No Return as "among the best" of Marquand's accomplishments. John Woodburn calls the novel the best since The Late George Apley (124, p. 12); and Prescott feels that "Point of No Return is top-grade Marquand, clever, observant, thoughtful, amusing, filled with the pleasure of recognition" (88, p. 766).

Writing in the New York Herald Tribune Book Review, James Hilton refers to the banking episodes in the novel as "magnificent" and reports that, "Point of No Return shows no new development in Mr. Marquand's art, but it does reinforce his reputation as a first-class satirist--probably the best of our generation" (48, p. 1).

Even the less favorable reviews fall far short of denunciation. For instance, Maxwell Geismar refers to the novel as "not altogether a success"; but he quickly follows with the comment, "Point of No Return is marvelously clever in design and execution and it is a pleasure to read, if in some respects it is painful to think about" (33, p. 1).

The critic's idea of what a novel should be, of course, has a significant bearing on his review as does the critic's

own philosophy of life. Max Fischer writes of Marquand's "mild satirical vein," and gives the author credit for a novel with "a solid craftsmanship of writing [which] gives as much tension as possible to this mildly interesting, slow-moving story" (29, p. 568). Critic Fischer goes on to reveal his own philosophy of composition, however, as he concludes the review of Marquand's novel with these comments:

The author is a great craftsman, not a poet. A poet could not have told this story without bringing forth the insight that most persons of this novel are really living in hell, without any spiritual desire banging against the walls of their self-sufficient world. We are not even sure whether the author is himself fully aware of the utter gloom of his world; he neither complains nor bewails. He just states the facts with the objectivity of a scientist and with apparently only the ambition of giving a most exact reproduction of life as he sees it. This book ends a chapter in literary history: it is the realization of Zola's program for the social novel, manufactured to its last consequences with the most expert and minute skill (29, p. 569).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

Since Marquand spends over half the novel exploring Charles Gray's background in Clyde, Massachusetts, there is much less material from which to draw illustrations relevant to this study than would be immediately apparent. And added to this lack, Marquand concentrates quite heavily on the domestic and social environment of the characters. As one critic points out, "One of Mr. Marquand's fortes, of course, is the minor drama of domestic strain . . ." (33, p. 1).

Certain limited illustrations of business problems and practices, however, may be found in Point of No Return.

Planning.--A significant aspect of the planning process is policy making; and the point of origination for company policy is often a question considered by students of business planning. One leading management text states:

Policy making thus involves all levels in the working organization to some degree. The function cannot be exclusively retained by top executives, although they hold a heavy responsibility for leadership. The executive role is one of mediating, reconciling, persuading, convincing, and of expressing and communicating policy. It is not a function of arbitrary establishment of policy by fiat (126, p. 38).

In the novel, Charles Gray expands on this idea as he considers the evolutionary aspect of policy formation in the Stuyvesant Bank. Gray considers the Stuyvesant more like a family than a business organization. He sees an advantage in that the bank is beyond the control of any individual or group:

The president and officers might fix the rules and policies under the general advice of the directors' board but those rules and policies themselves had a way of changing in a manner no individual could anticipate. They were swayed by practices and theories of other vanished personalities, by economic laws of loan and interest that stretched into the hazy past of the goldsmith guilds in the Middle Ages (66, p. 478).

Staffing.--One of the most important phases of the selection process is the interview, and it is the job of the interviewer to make observations and draw inferences from the facts he obtains. A leader in the personnel field adds:



In addition to providing an opportunity to obtain information from the applicant, the interview also provides a setting in which the applicant's personal characteristics such as his neatness, fluency of speech, correctness of grammar and pronunciation, mannerisms, poise, and other relevant and irrelevant characteristics may be observed (19, p. 156).

Charles Gray satirizes the technique used by the Stuyvesant Bank to "size up individuals as candidates for minor executive positions" where the interviewer makes part of his observations and inferences during a luncheon date:

The technique was always the same. The Stuyvesant at its executive level was very much like an exclusive club, requiring of a candidate certain definite standards for admission. You watched his hands as he held his knife and fork, the expression of his eyes when your glances met. As you listened to the inflections of his voice, you tried to think of his possible behavior under the strain of exasperation or temptation. Discretion, loyalty and trustworthiness were, of course, among those standards, but there were others less susceptible of definition, such as his attitude toward money. He could not have the businessman's greed or anxiety for profit if he was to be in the crowd. He could not covet money, but at the same time he must respect it in an impersonal way, as an astronomer might think of light-years in interstellar space (66, p. 368).

After reading this incident, the student might recall the warning that an interviewer can often be blinded by an over-emphasis on charm and a "good personality." And the interviewer must also remember that nervous behavior on the part of the applicant during an interview is a very natural reaction and possibly an indication of the applicant's intense desire to work for a particular company (19, p. 158).

Directing.--A topic which often emerges in a discussion of motivational aspects of the directing function is status. Defined as "relative position in a group or organization" or "relative social rank" (8, p. 496), status can be distinguished by a number of criteria. Status symbols and other distinctions of status, however, have some rather important functions and significance in the business organization.

One author notes that status symbols and distinctions "give us cues as to the appropriate way to act toward certain individuals" since the symbols "serve as a means of identifying and ranking people . . . people who have a certain status strive to maintain their position . . . status levels serve as incentives for employees to rise in the organization . . . and status helps promote group solidarity" (8, pp. 498-499).

J. P. Marquand is particularly adept at pointing out status distinctions--both within the business organization and without--as evidenced by the various social stratas. Within the Stuyvesant Bank, desks are quite significant:

Though you seldom talked of salaries at the Stuyvesant, your social status was obvious from the position of your desk. Charles occupied one of the two flat mahogany desks that stood in a sort of no man's land between the roll-top desks of the officers and the smaller flat-tops of lesser executives and secretaries crowding the floor of the bank outside the cages (66, p. 29).

One of the ways to achieve higher status and move from the flat mahogany desks to the roll-tops in the bank appeared to be via the route of conformity of dress. In a gently satirical vein, Marquand observes:

Charles never rebelled against this convention because Tony had everything one should expect to find in a president of a first-rate bank. It was amusing but not ridiculous to observe that all the minor executives in the Stuyvesant, as well as the more ambitious clerks, wore conservative double-breasted suits like Tony Burton's, at the same time allowing undue rigidity to break out into pin stripes and herringbones, just like Tony Burton's. They all visited the barber once a week. They all had taken up golf, whether they liked it or not, and most of them wore the same square type of wrist watch and the same stainless-steel strap. They had adopted Tony Burton's posture and his brisk, quick step and even the gently vibrant inflection of his voice (66, p. 81).

The novel offers even more illustrations of status distinctions within the social framework. For instance, the train one takes to commute to work is significant. The eight-thirty train "was designed for the executive aristocracy," whereas the eight-two was for members of the salaried class who had to be at their desks by nine (66, p. 16).

The neighborhood is important, and Charles Gray muses over the move from the two-family house in Larchmont "that smelled of cauliflower in the evenings," where he stumbled over the children's roller-skates and tricycles. The new house in Sycamore Park brought with it the Country Day

School for the children, a maid to do the work, and a "great crowd" of friends. Charles Gray was even asked to join the Oak Knoll Country Club, though he was "frank enough to admit that the Oak Knoll Club was not as good as the older country club at Hawthorn Hill" (66, pp. 108-110).

A final relevant illustration defies placement under any one process or function of management; but it deals with a practice seldom given a name although alluded to frequently in management texts. Charles Gray is forced to take a later train home:

. . . because he had stopped for a while in Boston to what Roger Blakesley would have called sweetening certain contacts. It was an expression which especially revolted him, but he recognized it as an essential part of business to drop in, now that he was in Boston, on a few old graduates of Rush and Company and on other acquaintances. He always did so on his rare visits there because you never could tell when it might help to have a working relationship with someone on State or Congress or Milk Street (66, p. 485).

The student is compelled at this juncture to place himself in Charles Gray's position. Would "sweetening certain contacts" be averse to his individual nature? Could he, therefore, operate under such a system? Would it be feasible to instigate change?

#### Summary Comments

Although evidence from this novel to support the major hypothesis of the study is not particularly strong, there is still much to be gained from reading Point of No Return.

The student of business gets a vivid picture of the social setting in which business operates. As one critic points out, "Marquand effectively suggests the superficial standards, the underlying restlessness of this suburban group, where young couples barely conceal their competitive feelings beneath the veneer of stereotyped behavior" (36, p. 72).

The student sees one "insider's" view of the banking institution; further he can rate the effect of the great depression of 1929 on the lives of many people; and he becomes, as a result, increasingly aware of the many contingencies of business life on which the management texts fail to touch. And all of this comes from the pen of a master in the art of fiction.

### The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit

#### About the Author

By the time his first widely acclaimed novel was published in 1955, Sloan Wilson had worn several uniforms--among them the gray flannel suit of commerce. Born in Norwalk, Connecticut, in 1920, Wilson was awarded the B. A. degree from Harvard after wearing the uniform of the United States Coast Guard. With the Coast Guard Wilson served as the commanding officer of first a small freighter and then a tanker in the South Pacific during World War II (122, p. 205).

The father of three children, Wilson donned the academic gown in 1953 at the University of Buffalo. There he doubled as an assistant professor of English and the university's public-relations man. His stint in business came during the interim between his war service and teaching post. Roy E. Larsen, president of Time, Inc., hired Wilson in 1947. The specific assignment was with the National Citizens' Commission for Public Schools, of which Larsen was chairman. The commission did not actually start until 1949; therefore, Wilson worked as a researcher for Time magazine for two years. He was assistant director for the school commission from 1949-1952.

In late 1955, the University of Buffalo gave the author a year's leave to handle the assistant directorship for the White House Conference on Education. A continuing advocate of raising the standards of American education and racially integrating the public schools, Wilson was made education editor of Parent's Magazine in December, 1955, and education editor of the New York Herald Tribune in August, 1956 (76, p. 489).

The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit was written, according to Wilson's quotation in the publisher's note, "largely between 7:00 p. m. and 2:00 a. m. and on week ends" during his first two years of full-time employment at Buffalo. Prior to that time Wilson had written a number of short stories for

The New Yorker and published other works in Harper's, The Saturday Review and The Yale Review (122, p. 305).

#### Summary of Novel Content

The man in the gray flannel suit is Tom Rath, and the story is his story. A veteran paratrooper of World War II, Rath with his suburbanized wife Betsy and their three children lives in Connecticut, commutes to his work in New York, and struggles through the age bracket he calls the "tired thirties" to feed and clothe his children, afford a bigger and better house in a "nicer" neighborhood, and provide financial security for his family. One critic notes that "Much of what Tom Rath, our man in gray flannel, has to cope with is simply Life; we can find it being coped with in the pages of George Eliot or Balzac or Jane Austen in much the same way as here" (20, p. 157).

Rath leaves his noncompetitive job with Schanenhauser Foundation, which seems to offer little opportunity for financial or creative advancement, to become special assistant to Ralph Hopkins, head of the United Broadcasting Corporation. Hopkins, a success-driven man who attempts to drive his subordinates as hard as he drives himself, accedes, however, to Tom's refusal to live his whole life for the corporation and agrees to advance him in executive positions as he learns the business.

Wilson includes a number of sub-plots or side-issues to round out his characterization of Tom Rath. There is the flashback to Tom's war experiences with its searing memories of mass murders and his accidental killing of a close, personal friend; the romantic interlude with Maria, the frightened Italian girl Tom picked up in a bar in Rome. Wilson portrays Tom's grandmother, forced by economic pressures to lower her standard of living from the aristocratic level at which she once stood; Saul Bernstein, the conscientious and sincere judge of South Bay; and Buggy Bugala, the "wheeler-dealer" local contractor.

#### Opinions of Literary Critics

The opinions of the critics have been somewhat divided over The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit. The most scathing reviews come from Time and Commonweal. Gerald Weales reports that Wilson has covered the bare bones of the novel "not with flesh, but with a welter of incident, as commonplace as it is irrelevant . . . . The reader is also introduced to a host of casual characters, but the novelist is incapable of any characterization that goes beyond a few surface mannerisms and a little stock soliloquizing that is quite false" (117, p. 525).

The Time reporter acknowledges that "Author Wilson has something to say," but he goes on, "his title sums up his book better than his story does." Tom Rath, "the young man



with a slipped disk in the backbone of his ambition," has a certain appeal to the critic; but of a secondary character, Ralph Hopkins, he says, "Though he strains visibly, Author Wilson never lifts his administrative czar Hopkins off the literary blueprints" (104, p. 102).

Referring to the novel as "one long protest against the system," Nora Magid feels that "Mr. Wilson is obviously at home with the tycoon and his peculiar problems, and these sections of his book are competent." The "extraneous ingredients tossed into the mixture for good measure" disturb her, however, and she calls the characterization "clumsy and top-heavy." In spite of these strictures and what she calls a "Pollyanna-cum-Freud" ending, Magid summarizes, "But for all its clutter and contrivance, the book is readable. It conforms to the current formula--big business, lightly spiced with sex and a dash of wartime reminiscence" (65, pp. 19-20).

Reviews of a more favorable nature call Wilson's best-seller an "exceedingly engaging novel . . . a book of pleasant wit and an unflinching charm" (78, pp. 473-474); the work of a writer who "manages to hold the reader's interest and at the same time to solve Rath's problems without distorting his character (28, p. 1); "a consequential novel, if not a definitive one, by a mature writer who knows unwaveringly what he is about" (53, p. 9).

More germane to the purpose, however, is the criticism advanced by Kenneth Lynn in the Harvard Business Review. "What, in sum," he relates, "starts out to be a genuine business novel undergoes the familiar transformation to sharply observed comedy, then ends as pure soap opera." The "vividly presented details of the culture of Suburbia" are what actually lend the novel a certain charm and form the real source of its appeal (59, p. 122).

Though there is a great deal of validity in Lynn's criticism, from a literary standpoint The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit is by no means a complete failure. There is a small degree of plot manipulation, the conclusion is perhaps a bit glib, and the characterization falls short here and there. The novel does have unity, however, in that it sticks to the subject of people, places, and things which shape the life of Tom Rath; the main character is fully developed, consistent, and plausible; and the author acting as omniscient observer adds breadth and depth to the presentation.

Despite the fact that much of the novel takes place outside the business setting (the point to which critic Lynn refers), there are several instances where the author presents problems and practices of management which should be revealing to the student of business.

Revelations of Interest in Management

One critic calls attention to the business environment when she notes the "satire in Mr. Wilson's pages describing the inner workings of the organization, the knee-bending to its president, the great Ralph Hopkins, the caste divisions of personnel, the commands barked out on the inter-communications telephones, the working routine that leaves no time for a personal life" (28, p. 1). Though there is some degree of truth in this statement, several situations in the novel should bring to the mind of the student of management some very apropos characters and circumstances.

Planning.--One incident in the novel reflects managerial planning, "a primary requisite to the managerial functions of organization, staffing, direction, and control" (54, p. 72). Ralph Hopkins, the \$200,000-a-year president of United Broadcasting Corporation, impresses the planning function on Tom Rath while instructing him concerning the initiation of a national mental health foundation.

Hopkins calls first for an exploratory committee--"a really representative group" (122, p. 243), with representatives from such factions as labor and management; Republican and Democrat; Protestant, Catholic and Jewish; conservative and liberal; black and white. Hopkins hopes to forestall what management specialists refer to when they say: "Planning

not only involves predetermining a course of action to be taken, relative to a known event, but it includes mentally searching for possibilities of future problems that might appear" (70, p. 61).

To aid the exploratory committee, Hopkins suggests an advisory medical panel staffed with the heads of all the major medical associations and the best psychiatrists. He outlines preliminary work on getting the National Mental Health Committee incorporated. A broad barrage of publicity aimed to make people more aware of mental-health problems rounds out his program. All of these are merely suggestions for Tom Rath, who is further charged with forming a "small study group to develop a long-range plan for attacking the problem" (122, p. 244).

Another facet of planning is specifically called to Tom's attention. He is told that Hopkins will want cost estimates based on economic forecasting:

How about plans for staff? How much of a staff is this committee going to need when it gets going? You're going to have to answer that before you can make out a tentative budget . . . . Get some data together! How much of a staff does the polio outfit have, and what did it start with? How about the cancer outfit? What are their budgets? You've got to think these things out for yourself (59, p. 261)!

The task facing Tom, therefore, is one of developing the groundwork for the forecasting process. This is comparable to the first essential element in the forecasting process summarized in a leading business journal. For a production

organization, developing the groundwork means "carrying out an orderly investigation of products, company, and industry, in order to determine generally how each one of these has progressed in the past, separately and in relation to each other" (91, p. 82).

Managerial planning cannot be bound within the confines of the business organization. Just as planning and setting objectives is important to the large corporation, it is essential for the businessman to perform this same function for himself. Management texts point this out in passages similar to the following:

Management is in large measure a process of coordinating, reconciling, and integrating the goals of individuals within the organization to maximize achievement of the organization's goals . . . . Because the managers are responsible for leadership and direction, the priorities they establish among their own goals are of special importance (126, p. 30).

Sloan Wilson poses the dilemma for Tom Rath of setting personal objectives. The broadcasting executive Hopkins asks Rath to be his personal assistant. Rath quite apprehensive about the position and fearful that Hopkins wants to create him in his own image, engages in some thoughtful soul searching. Talking to his wife Betsy, Rath explains:

I don't like being the shadow of another man. Should I ask him to give me a top administrative job? I wouldn't know what to do with it if I had it. I must be getting old or something--I'm beginning to realize my limitations. I'm not a very good administrator--not compared to guys like Hopkins and Ogden. I never will be, and the main reason is, I don't want to be.

This sounds like a silly way to put it, but I don't think you can get to be a top administrator without working every week end for half your life, and I'd just as soon spend my week ends with you and the kids (122, p. 250).

Ultimately when Rath finds he must communicate his decision to Hopkins, he asserts:

I don't think I'm the kind of guy who should try to be a big executive. I'll say it frankly: I don't think I have the willingness to make the sacrifices . . . . I'm willing to look at it straight. There are a lot of contradictions in my own thinking I've got to face. In spite of everything I've said, I'm still ambitious. I want to get ahead as far as I possibly can without sacrificing my entire personal life (122, p. 277).

Staffing.--The criticism cited earlier concerning the lack of reality in the characters and circumstances of the business world is reinforced by a statement by John McNulty in the New York Times Book Review. McNulty characterizes The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit as "an interesting but spotty job. It is spotty because it is not easily believable in places" (63, p. 18). The literary critic refers specifically to the situation where Tom Rath "gets a job as public relations officer for Ralph Hopkins . . . merely by walking into the offices in Radio City, applying for the position (not job), and filling out a brief autobiography." In McNulty's terminology, "That doesn't seem the way in which such posts are handed out" (63, p. 18).

The critic either failed to read the novel closely enough, however, or deliberately distorted the facts to

support his position. An observant reader and certainly a student of management should immediately recognize one phase of the staffing process--the various steps of a typical selection program for executives ranging from a reception of the applicant with a preliminary interview to the final interview (actually a series of interviews) with the top corporate executives. Though Wilson could possibly have gone into more detail in discussing the selection process, it hardly seemed necessary. He touched on all the essentials. For instance, "It took Everett only about a minute to size Tom up as a 'possibility.' He gave him a long printed form to fill out and told him he'd hear from the United Broadcasting Corporation in a few days. Tom spent almost an hour filling out all the pages of the form, which, among other things, required a list of the childhood diseases he had had and the names of the countries he had visited" (122, p. 11).

Wilson touches on Tom's quandary over whether or not he should tell his present employer he is applying for a new job:

'The danger of not telling him was that the broadcasting company might call him for references any time, and Dick wouldn't be pleased to find that Tom was applying for another job behind his back. It was important to keep Dick's good will, because the broadcasting company's decision might depend on the recommendation Dick gave him . . . . On the other hand, it would be embarrassing to tell Dick he was seeking another job and then be unable to find one (122, p. 11).

The requirement of an autobiographical sketch, referred to by critic McNulty, though not included as a standard

selection procedure in personnel texts, illustrates the innovation that is going on in business to meet the unique demands of a dynamic environment. Tom is asked:

I have a little favor I want to ask of you. I want you to write me your autobiography . . . . Nothing very long . . . just as much as you can manage to type out in an hour . . . . Explain yourself to me. Tell me what kind of person you are. Explain why we should hire you . . . . You see, this is a device I use in employing people--I find it most helpful. For this particular job, I have twenty or thirty applicants. It's hard to tell from a brief interview whom to choose, so I ask them all to write about themselves for an hour. You'd be surprised how revealing the results are . . . . Write anything you want, but at the end of your last page, I'd like you to finish this sentence: 'The most significant thing about me is . . . . ' (122, p. 14).

After Tom Rath accepts the job as personal assistant to the tycoonish president of the United Broadcasting Corporation, he finds himself in a rather precarious position with regard to the former employees:

He (Tom) sat at a desk in a corner--it had been necessary to move Miss MacDonald's desk and those of the two typists to make room for him. Hopkins' office had not been designed with accommodations for a personal assistant. Miss MacDonald seemed flustered by the change. She sat at her desk nervously thumbing through correspondence, and whenever Tom said anything to her, she answered with an exaggerated politeness which was almost worse than the coldness which Ogden displayed (122, p. 257).

Situations such as these, bring to mind a major consideration of policy in the staffing process: promotion from within. An organization which moves its employees from workers to front-line supervisors and thence upward through the organizational



hierarchy stands to gain long-run commitment and high employee morale. A leading student of personnel practices emphasizes the advantages of minimum orientation and training periods in the new job for seasoned employees and reduced risk on the part of management as compared to the uncertainties and delays involved in employing an outsider who is largely an unknown quantity (8, p. 347).

Perhaps by moving Tom Rath, the outsider, into a key executive position, Hopkins hopes to avoid in-breeding--the most serious weakness of an exclusive reliance upon promotion from within (8, p. 347 and 54, p. 403). Regardless of the reason, however, Tom experiences the negative impact of his having been moved in above other faithful employees. One management text refers to this as "The morale problem of dealing with grumpy, frustrated, uncooperative executives who have not been selected for a given promotion" (54, p. 405).

Directing.--Wilson offers an excellent contrast in styles of leadership by showing Ralph Hopkins' effect on Tom Rath and then by showing the effect of Bill Ogden, one of Hopkins' top executives in the corporation, on Tom. Rath is charged with the responsibility of writing a speech for Hopkins to deliver before a group of physicians to kick off a national campaign on mental health. After typing for the fifth time the final draft of a first draft of Hopkins' speech, Rath presents the original and a copy to Ogden for his appraisal:

He (Tom) didn't expect Ogden to throw up his hands and cheer when he read the speech, but he was totally unprepared when Ogden, after finishing the first two pages, slammed the speech down on his desk and said, 'Christ! This is awful! It isn't what we want at all!' . . . . 'You can do better than this!' Ogden said contemptuously, before Tom had a chance to say anything, 'Take it back and do it over. See if you can have something ready by tonight. Mr. Hopkins wants to see you at his apartment at eight-thirty. And this time, really try' (122, p. 125).

Tom's immediate impulse is to kill Ogden, but he tackles the speech again in preparation for the eight-thirty meeting with Hopkins. The reaction by Hopkins to the revised speech is quite different from Ogden's reaction:

'Wonderful!' Hopkins suddenly boomed . . . .  
'Marvelous,' Hopkins said, even louder. His whole face was beaming with satisfaction. 'You've really got the feel for it!' . . . . 'This really sings,' Hopkins said enthusiastically. 'It's remarkable that you could do so well the first time around!'

'It's a second draft, actually,' Tom said. 'Mr. Ogden gave me some suggestions.'

'The heart of the thing is just right!' Hopkins said. 'Now let's just go over it together. Did you bring a copy?' . . . .

Sentence by sentence Hopkins took the whole speech apart. When he finished, he had asked for changes in almost every paragraph. 'Well!' he concluded. 'You certainly did a grand job! Just fix up the details we've worked out and let's see it again in a few days. Would Wednesday be too early?'

. . . .  
Tom gulped his drink and excused himself as rapidly as possible. He was halfway to Grand Central Station before he fully realized that Ogden and Hopkins had simply told him the same thing in two different ways: to rewrite the speech. In spite of this, Hopkins had somehow left him eager to try. Well, he thought admiringly, I always heard he could drive men and make them like it (122, p. 127).

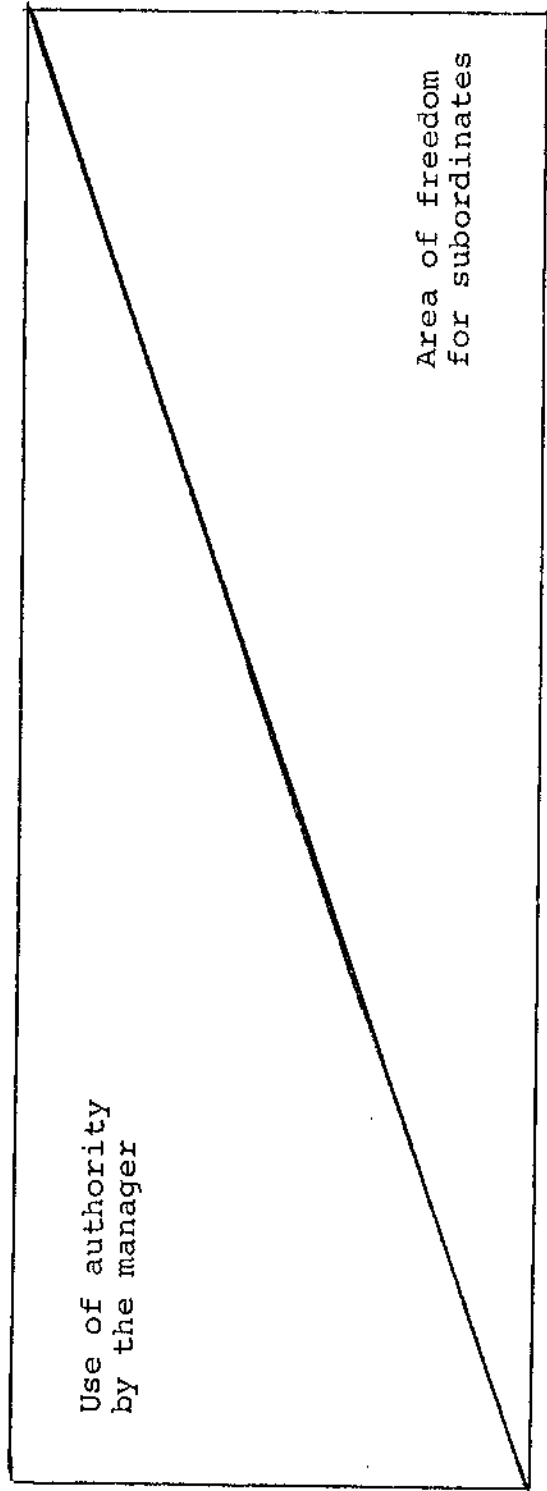
This situation vividly brings back Tannenbaum and Schmidt's frequently reproduced "Continuum of Leadership Behavior." (See Figure 1).

In looking at the continuum, one sees the highly autocratic supervisor on the far left. The most democratic supervisor appears on the opposite end. In graphic form, this illustration simply portrays the progression from one leadership style to the next, indicating the degree of authority used by the boss and conversely the amount of freedom available to subordinates in reaching a decision.

The researchers in presenting the leadership behavior theory stress flexibility in leadership styles. Forces within the supervisor, within the subordinates, and within the situation should all be considered by an executive choosing the correct pattern of behavior for each situation. The successful manager is neither the autocratic leader nor the permissive one. He is the "one who maintains a high batting average in accurately assessing the forces that determine what his most appropriate behavior at any given time should be" (110, pp. 95-101).

Though there are no other cases on which to check Hopkins' "batting average," it is quite evident that he scores higher than Ogden as a leader. On the continuum, Ogden would fall to the extreme left. Hopkins would be a little more difficult to place; but he would likely fall

←————→  
 Boss-centered leadership      Subordinate-centered leadership



Use of authority  
by the manager

Area of freedom  
for subordinates

Manager makes decision and announces it.	Manager "sells" decision.	Manager presents ideas and invites questions.	Manager presents tentative decision subject to change.	Manager presents problems, gets suggestions, makes decision.	Manager defines limits; asks group to make decision.	Manager permits subordinate to function within limits defined by superior.
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Fig. 1--Continuum of Leadership Behavior

rather close to Ogden on the graphic display. His skills seem to be those of insight, flexibility, and tact.

#### Summary Comments

Though the preceding illustrations do not completely exhaust the situations in the novel pertinent to this study, they do encompass the majority of them. Sloan Wilson, like John Marquand and the novelists discussed in Chapter Two, often takes his characters out of the strict environment of business and into a setting where the author obviously feels more at home. There may be less meat for a student of management, but he can most certainly enhance his understanding of the social context of the business environment.

#### From the Terrace

#### About the Author

Before John O'Hara died in 1970 at the age of sixty-five, he authored over twenty major works of fiction, including three novels subsequently produced as motion pictures (Butterfield 8, Ten North Frederick, and From the Terrace). For Pal Joey, which was made into a Rodgers and Hart musical, O'Hara received the New York Critics Circle and Donaldson awards in 1956. In 1956 he also received the National Book Award for Ten North Frederick (26, p. 326).

Though O'Hara's biography lists no direct business experience, he worked as reporter, copy reader, columnist, war

correspondent, and drama and movie critic on newspapers and magazines in New York and Pennsylvania. Judging from the various clubs to which the novelist belonged, ranging from The Raquet Club in Philadelphia and The Beach Club in Santa Barbara to The Leash Club in New York, O'Hara must have made an attempt to lead the life of several of his novel heroes, including Alfred Eaton in From the Terrace (26, p. 326).

During his lifetime, O'Hara found his name quite regularly on the best-seller list; and though he is today best known for the novels on which he received divided critical opinions, O'Hara has rather consistently been accorded favorable criticism for his short stories. His writings have been described as "vigorous, alive, tumultuous, but often bearing little literary significance." Edmund Wilson has called O'Hara "'primarily a social commentator,'" and Louis Auchincloss offers this opinion:

'If O'Hara were consciously trying to describe the chaos of a society where each individual flouts the moral code, yet applies it with brutal bigotry to his neighbor . . . he might be a more important novelist than he is . . . . What he appears to be doing . . . is to be writing an old-fashioned novel of manners where the most important item about any character is the social niche in which he was born' (26, p. 326).

#### Summary of Novel Content

From the Terrace offers in minute detail the life and loves of Raymond Alfred Eaton, from his birth in 1897 as the second and unloved son of a steelmaster millionaire father

to what one reviewer calls, "The rest [which is] milk, rest, probanthine, the Legion of Merit, convalescence (and obsolescence) on the terrace of a rented house in California" (119, p. 551).

Alfred Eaton attended prep school at Knox; studied two years at Princeton, joined the Navy at the outset of World War I, manufactured airplanes with his best friend, and ultimately made his million on Wall Street. World War II found him Assistant Secretary to the Navy. From the Washington, D. C. post Eaton moved to retirement and boredom as the result of an ulcer and massive hemorrhage.

Interwoven with--and indeed an integral part of--the chronicle of Eaton's life are the explicit details concerning the women in his life. From his first and idealized romance with Victoria Dockwiler to life with his two wives, Eaton's sexual prowess is itemized. Though one reviewer points out that "O'Hara seems to make a more serious effort in this novel than he did in either A Rage to Live or Ten North Frederick to subordinate sex to plot rather than plot to sex" (89, p. 84), the emphasis on sex has furnished the lion's share of criticism of this novel (22, 72, 93, 115). Granville Hicks remarks rather wryly:

As once more, his readers will expect, O'Hara deals with sexual matters not by any process of delicate allusion, but by the adducing of precise physiological details. Other novelists in recent years have been as relentlessly physiological as O'Hara, but none has so consistently devoted himself to the factual

approach. One would sometimes think that he had the benefit of a research staff as large as that employed by the late Dr. Kinsey (47, p. 14).

### Opinions of Literary Critics

Opinions of literary critics are divided over From the Terrace, just as they have been over the majority of O'Hara's works. For instance, from one side comes the view:

O'Hara's sentences are coherent enough but they lack vigor; his dialogue, which has been admired, is not good dialogue at all. He is deft with words but the conversations sound as if they had been recorded. The reader is not in the room with the characters; he is outside, with his ear and, less often, his eye to the keyhole (22, p. 322).

But from the respected New York Herald Tribune Book Review comes the statement, "It is difficult to do justice to the keenness of his ear for people talking, the acid wit with which he endows many of his characters, or the variety of his narrative techniques" (96, p. 1).

Several reviewers (72, 93, 47) agree with the substance of West's commentary when he says, "In From the Terrace, Mr. O'Hara is trying too hard, attempting excessive objectivity." Critic West concludes, though:

But for comprehensive and sometimes ferocious intelligence, sifting without interpreting the substance of human downfall, From the Terrace is unforgettable. It has power, grandeur, accuracy and the ghastly pressure of this industrial century. Possibly, even, its very lack of integration is meant to force upon us more depressingly than usual the familiar O'Hara theme: that man is at odds with himself for ineludible reasons (119, p. 552).



One of the most revealing comments, however, comes in the rather oblique compliment: "Whatever its disabilities, From the Terrace arrives on a literary scene so bleak and hackneyed that the book outruns most of the competition even while standing still." And the reviewer ends by saying:

When Appointment in Samarra appeared almost a quarter-century ago, it was apparent that Hemingway, Faulkner and Fitzgerald had a challenger. From the Terrace is probably the best novel O'Hara has written since Samarra: but he is still the challenger (89, p. 84).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

After discoveries From the Terrace cited in several bibliographical reference sources as a novel with a business theme, and also noting the length of the work, one would expect to find numerous illustrations and situations in the novel to support the major interest of this study. Such is not the case.

O'Hara takes his reader into the actual business environment only at infrequent intervals. He offers few details of Eaton's business career, and those that are offered seem to appear merely as a vehicle for introducing some phase of the hero's sex life. And as indicated previously, the author spares no detail in his discussions of the sexual adventures of Eaton and all the other characters in the book.

O'Hara does, however, consider seriously his role as a social historian; and as Granville Hicks notes, ". . . fiction

offers no more carefully documented account of American life in the first half of the twentieth century than 'From the Terrace'" (47, p. 14).

Much of the social history O'Hara portrays has little bearing on the business organization. Some does, however. For instance, the attitude of the upper class toward divorce has a direct relationship to a man's career:

A man on his way up suffered his wife's infidelity rather than take public action that he knew would end his career . . . . But if the system controlled the divorce rate, it also made a minor misdemeanor of infidelity (81, pp. 458-459).

The right "connections" and the right sports also have a direct relationship to a man's career:

Neither Mary nor Alfred was a blood relation of the families which maintained good order, and their financial connection was so remote that it was unimportant . . . . But Mary had friends of long standing on the North Shore, and Alfred had been taken up, in the current phrase, by Fritz Thornton, who, while not a business figure of the first rank, was a very rich man who was prominent in most of the right sports (81, p. 459).

At another point in the narrative the comment is made, "Mary Eaton's Rowland blood made her automatically acceptable to the Aviretts, and as a MacHardie partner on a mission Alfred Eaton's blood did not matter" (81, p. 621).

The following description further indicates the importance of social position. Alfred Eaton is called:

. . . the man [who] had made a good marriage and was off to a good start in business by proving he wanted to work. He was good-looking, good at lawn tennis, a promising court tennis player, a good swimmer, drank

but had never been seen drunk, had some sort of a way with the women, and at the same time had a reserved something in his manner that signified good breeding and not merely a middle-class unfamiliarity with his new surroundings (81, p. 459).

Despite Eaton's favorable impression, however, he still needed the "dramatic touch to have a lasting effect." This he gained by rescuing the grandson of James D. MacHardie, wealthy and renowned Wall Street financier, from a fall through a frozen pond while ice skating.

Though O'Hara does not probe the underlying motives of his characters as deeply as many novelists, he does offer some perceptive comments. In one situation, he pictures Alfred Eaton pondering the presence of two acquaintances of very diverse natures in the "new government" of Franklin D. Roosevelt:

Duffy, he was convinced, was in it for personal prestige, willing enough to punish individual members of the financial community, but not so willing completely to sacrifice the system. But Tom Rothermel was a zealot, an educated errand-boy with an errand-boy's psychology, willing enough to avenge his early poverty but neither willing to stop there nor eager for the personal power of high office. Tom was bloodthirsty but not ambitious; Duffy was in favor of change for the sake of Duffy, but presumably intelligent enough to foresee that in an absolute change he would be sacrificed along with the system, and in a drastic, overnight change, he would be shot as quickly as James D. MacHardie and even against the same wall (81, p. 619).

The author considers, in addition to the motives of his characters, the motives of the financial community and the effects on that community of such political activities as war. MacHardie sends Eaton to Washington to "feel the pulse" on

the political front. After his return report containing, most significantly, the expert opinion that there would be war in Europe within five years, Eaton is congratulated by his superior who observes:

'An excellent summary, no matter how unpleasant it may be in its implications. It's quite true that we make money in wartime, but the older I get the more I'm convinced that we don't make as much as our dollars say we do. The dollars lose in value, and governments gain in power over the individual. Taxes rise and stay risen. Whenever a government in time of war or other disaster, or emergency, takes away some of the private rights of the citizens, they never give back any of the important things. We gave up sugar and meat during the last war, and we got them back, but the income tax is here to stay, and I'm only afraid that the gentleman now in the White House has just begun to take away other freedoms in the guise of meeting an emergency (81, p. 635).

Before the beginning of a trip prior to the one to Washington, Eaton was counseled by MacHardie concerning the best sources of information:

It's getting a little late for golf, but take your sticks with you. However, you are not to confine yourself to bankers. Rowley's will give you the names of businessmen, priests, dear old ladies, lawyers--all sorts of people. I wouldn't waste too much time on the dear old ladies, but a priest knows as well as anyone in the town if a mine is in good shape. Doctors the same. Are people paying their bills? It's almost wide open down there so have a good look at the saloons (81, p. 489).

Other than the aspects of social history which would have direct relevance to a study of this nature, O'Hara makes a few incidental references to specific topics of concern in management. For instance, he describes in the person of

Samuel Eaton a leadership style characteristic of the early 1900's:

There was never a man that stood up to that fellow that was on the payroll the next day. My old man, that had this job before me, he used to say Sam Eaton was all right as long as you did your work and just answered his questions. 'Don't you tell him anything first,' my old man said. 'Just answer his questions' (81, p. 237).

The author, further, lends support to the managerial teaching that monetary incentives are often of secondary importance to scientific and professional personnel.

Lawrence B. Von Elm, a designer and aeronautical engineer in the novel, emphasizes:

'Crimmy, yes. I could have gone to work any time, but I've been waiting for the job with the best prospects, not just the pay, but what I want to do. I could go with the Ford Motor Company, but they wouldn't let me do anything on my own. It's all Mr. Stout out there. I'm going with you for two reasons. First, I'll start as head designer and I can work out my own plans without interference' (81, p. 398).

Finally, O'Hara calls attention to the selection process by recording Eaton's conversation with MacHardie prior to his appointment to the firm:

. . . I made inquiries, and I am now in possession of a set of facts concerning you that I daresay is as complete as any ever compiled. These include transcripts of your marks at the Knox School and Princeton, your Navy record, your health report--we have a participating interest in an insurance company--your credit rating, and such out-of-the-ordinary facts as the time you were beaten up at Princeton, and your close relationship with your maternal grandfather, and various extremely private matters concerning your family. We are, or our agents are, quite thorough, Mr. Eaton. We are also

careful. But at the same time, with a limited opportunity to get to know you, I have been most strongly influenced by my own, call them hunches, although I detest that word for what it means down in this part of the city. Now, is there anything you would like to know about us?' (81, p. 476).

Many students undoubtedly will have reservations about such dossier-keeping techniques in business. And certainly many organizations can offer no valid reasons for compiling the masses of personal data they collect on prospective employees. In other words, this technique is misused, just as any technique in any field can be misused. Data some individuals consider extremely personal is vital to the organization, however, when an employee must receive what the military calls "top-security clearance."

#### The Lincoln Lords

#### About the Author

Of all the authors considered in this study, Cameron Hawley has the strongest background of actual business experience. Born in 1905, Hawley began his business career at the age of twelve as a printer's apprentice for a small town weekly newspaper. In Minneapolis he worked as the advertising manager for a building materials company and on the creative staff of a direct mail advertising agency (26, p. 433).

The year 1927 found the part-time author affiliated with the Armstrong Cork Company of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. With

Armstrong, Hawley held various executive posts with responsibilities ranging from sales promotion to direction of scientific research. He became particularly known for his application of dramatic and theatrical methods to sales promotional activities (26, p. 433).

In 1951 Hawley retired from business to devote his full attention to writing. In addition to contributing short stories to national magazines, writing radio and television plays plus documentary motion pictures, author Hawley has produced four major novels. Prior to writing The Lincoln Lords, he had two successful works. Executive Suite was translated into fourteen languages and produced as a motion picture by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Cash McCall, produced as a movie by Warner Brothers, was chosen as a Literary Guild monthly selection and featured in a special presentation by Life (27, p. 433).

Following The Lincoln Lords, also a Literary Guild selection, Hawley published The Hurricane Years, the story of a man suffering from an occupational hazard of big business-- the coronary occlusion.

#### Summary of Novel Content

With The Lincoln Lords Cameron Hawley has not abandoned the executive suite. This novel, moreover, "should establish Cameron Hawley as the dean of corporate board room fiction" (30, p. 13). The Lincoln Lords are actually Lincoln and

Maggie Lord. As the novel opens "Linc" is temporarily out of work. He has just left a \$50,000 per year job and his fifth company presidency in ten years. Maggie, his ambitious yet understanding ex-secretary wife, suffers the pangs of unemployment along with him.

Lord has gained a wide range of managerial experience in the food, drug, cosmetic, and chemical industries. He has served on a White House Far East trade mission and elicited large endowments as prize orator at college fund-raising dinners.

After accepting the presidency of a small canning company temporarily in desperate straits because of the death of its owner-manager and the loss of its major outlet, Lord is sought to fill the presidency of his old college.

The primary action in the story centers around Lord's efforts to get the Coastal Foods Company back on its feet. One critic relates, "The evidence of Mr. Hawley's talent as a writer is never more apparent than in the current novel when he is exploring, explaining and detailing the problems of running a cannery" (74, p. 4). Another admits, ". . . although one is not apt to learn much about humanity in his pages, there is much fascinating information about corporations" (123, p. 29).

The climax and core of the novel emerges when Lord is faced with the decision of whether or not to destroy forever



the market value of a highly publicized and potentially profitable baby food. There is a slight possibility that the new product has caused an epidemic in a nearby community, endangering the lives of hundreds of babies. Should Lord make an immediate public appeal for consumers not to use the product or wait one day for further test results? It is primarily to this situation that one critic refers when he recommends The Lincoln Lords in part because of ". . . the exciting way the author handles the problems of business ethics and human values . . . ." (50, p. 119).

#### Opinions of Literary Critics

The critics, with only one rather inconsequential exception, have been basically complimentary of Hawley's third major novel. ". . . in providing an unimportant answer to an unimportant question . . . Hawley does no better than his hero: he just keeps that handsome jaw moving" (82, p. 106), is the substance of the negative review.

Other reviewers note weaknesses of the novel but temper their criticism with praise. "Lincoln, Maggie, their son, and the many widely diversified characters who stream through this story are all thinly but credibly and authoritatively portrayed, and Mr. Hawley, writing in a direct, loquacious, ordinary style, has produced a tale of American business that is almost continuously interesting" (57, pp. 142-143).

When a critic has a negative comment, it is usually about Hawley's characterization. For instance, "His characterizations are one-dimensional and shallow and his people never quite come alive enough for you to care much about them as individuals. On the other hand, you care deeply about his corporations" (74, p. 4). Another critic finds Lincoln Lord much less fascinating than the numerous problems which crop up in the novel, ranging from complexities in human beings to the intricate machinery of modern advertising and distribution methods (50, p. 119).

What seems, however, to be the most objective assessment of the novel comes from Earl Foell writing in The Christian Science Monitor:

Mr. Hawley's achievement is that he has filled out that character [Lincoln Lord] so subtly and so well. He has done so with a minimum of physical description--Lincoln Lord is built out of ideas, impressions, mental conflicts. His life, his son, his idea-man sidekick, his many business contacts, each see his climbing and faltering on the ladder of success as representing different strengths and weaknesses in his character. And Mr. Hawley obviously invites his readers to participate in the fascinating game of deciphering what is happening to Lincoln Lord's thinking as his career moves from one crisis-of-opportunity to another.

That in fact, is both the educating and entertaining heart of Mr. Hawley's plot--the nip-and-tuck battle between opportunism and leadership that shapes the career of a modern business executive (30, p. 7).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

It is not at all surprising to discover the number of interesting illustrations of problems and practices of

management brought out in The Lincoln Lords. Hawley offers a variety of situations from which the student may glean information.

Planning.--One very significant part of the planning process which any manager must take into account is that of dealing with externally imposed policies. These external forces can stem from such factors as governmental regulation of business, community attitudes, and pressure exerted by major stockholders. Hawley elucidates the last force when he pictures a situation which ultimately caused Lincoln Lord to leave the Frazer Glass Company.

The glass manufacturing concern of which Lincoln Lord was president had for many years limited its business (something over three-quarters of the total volume) to supplying bottles for the Jersey Food Canneries. This placed the company in a very competitive position with a low margin of profit. In an effort to better the situation, Lord started out to convert some of the company's output to private mold business or special designs of glassware which could be sold at a better price. With a complete new sales and promotional operation plus an offer of package designing service, the company actually attracted more new business than it was capable of filling under the then present conditions. The only solution was to rebuild a whole section of the plant (42, pp. 51-53).

There were two factions in the glass company. Two families owned most of the stock--the Coateses and the Stackses. Lord was fortunate in that Mr. Coates, the chairman of the board, was sold on the new plant; and the proposal was ultimately "jammed through." The Stacks' faction almost presented an insurmountable problem, however:

'The Stacks crowd--at least old Harvey Stacks himself--was more interested in milking cash out of the company than he was in building for the future. The company had piled up a fair-sized cash surplus during the war and Stacks wanted to get his hands on it. At least the Stacks crowd didn't want to see it get tied up in fixed assets' (42, p. 53).

One can see the corresponding problem of organization in this situation, where a corporate official is charged with the responsibility for profit in an organization and yet comes close to having his hands tied because of a lack of authority to carry out his responsibility.

Another aspect of the planning function can be observed in this same illustration. The "limiting factor" discussed today in managerial planning was described by C. I. Barnard in 1938:

If we take any system, or set of conditions, or conglomeration of circumstances existing at a given time, we recognize that it consists of elements, or parts, or factors, which together make up the whole system, set of conditions, or circumstances. Now if we approach this system or set of circumstances with a view to the accomplishment of a purpose (and only when we do approach it), the elements or parts become distinguished into two classes: those which if absent or changed would accomplish the desired purpose, provided the others remain unchanged, and these others. The first kind are called limiting factors, the second, complementary factors (6, pp. 202-203).

In the novel, Frazer Glass finds machine design and plant capacity to be immediate limiting factors in their planning process. Presenting the situation of Frazer Glass with a tremendous backlog of new orders, Hawley has Brick Mitchell make the following explanation:

. . . actually the trouble was that we got too much of it. [new business] Too much, I mean, for the kind of plant we had. You see, the factory wasn't really geared up to make what we were selling. They'd been turning out standard bottles in long runs--just put on the molds and let the machines go. When we tried to swing over to these special designs, we couldn't get out the production. The plant just wasn't set up to turn out that kind of ware. For one thing, the tanks were too big . . . . The way the plant was laid out, there wasn't enough room to crowd in more machines. The only solution was to rebuild a whole section of the plant (42, pp. 52-53).

The Lincoln Lords is replete with interesting situations involving problems peculiar to operating a cannery. Yet many of these illustrations have a wider range of application. In discussing the design of jobs and work methods, a student of production management stresses "man and machine utilization" as a key concept. Of this he says, "The concepts of man-machine utilization are based on the analysis and timing of the relationships of required activities with the objective of finding combinations which maximize utilization" (16, p. 364).

Hawley illustrates this planning concept when he has Kennan explain to Lord an ingenious adaptation on a spinach washer. Ordinarily the machine would "sit around taking up space and depreciating its head off for forty-nine weeks of

the year" (42, p. 155). But Mike Schlager, the chief engineer, has adapted the spinach washer to perform a half-dozen other functions. Of this accomplishment, Kennan explains:

'When you design a new cannery these days, the usual approach is to set up a specialized plant to pack one particular thing, or at least a group of products that are all processed in the same way. With your operations more or less standardized, you can keep your costs down--that's the theory. But we've gone at it the other way around. What we've tried to do is to get a plant so flexible that we can pack almost anything--within reason, of course,--and still keep our costs within shooting distance of a specialized plant . . . .' (42, p. 155).

At the core of planning is the decision making process.

One author notes, "Managers see it as their central job, because they must constantly choose what is to be done, who is to do it, when, where, and sometimes even how" (64, p. 135).

A rather insightful comment about this process comes from Hawley when he explores Lord's attitude on creative thinking:

As Lincoln Lord practices it, corporate management had been far more a matter of selection than of creation. He had never been, nor tried to be, a source of imaginative thinking. He could, perhaps, have trained his mind to work more naturally in that direction had he not noticed, as early as his student days at Chesapeake College, that the man of ideas usually had difficulty getting along with his associates. Later he had been warned by observation that a general management executive was rarely capable of fairly judging the worth of another man's idea when it had to be weighed against a brain child of his own. Thus he had come to accent the presidential function as that of a judge and arbiter who solved any given problem by selecting from all of the ideas that flowed up to his desk the one that promised to be the most practical and surely productive (42, p. 204).

Organizing.--Often in discussions of organizational structure, the question arises, "Where does the work really get done?" or "Who is actually responsible for making the decisions?" This question applies not only to the work of the line-and-staff organization, but to the activities of the Board of Directors as well. In a college or university system, one can equate the Board of Regents with the Board of Directors in a business or industrial organization.

At one point in his career Lincoln Lord was being considered for the presidency of Chesapeake College. The acting president, who desired to serve the college as provost primarily because of what he called a "lack of financial foresight," evidences a pointed realization in answer to the above question:

In the months since he had become the acting head of Chesapeake College, Dr. Arthur B. Whittaker had learned a few lessons about the functioning of the board of regents. One was that the real decisions were made, not in the walnut-paneled board room in Quincy Hall but in quiet little preliminary sessions in the downtown law offices of Crockett, Bancroft and Crockett (42, p. 109).

Another interesting organizational controversy is also brought to mind by this state of affairs. Much discussion has been generated in recent years about the concept of the plural executive. According to Professor Sisk, "When committees assume the responsibilities of an executive, they are referred to as a plural executive; and, as the phrase

implies, the group functions as a single executive" (103, p. 353).

One might be led to question what actually happens in practice concerning the making of decisions under a plural executive set-up, however, when he views instances similar to the one involving the Board of Regents of Chesapeake College. The American Management Association showed a concern with this problem when it conducted a survey to determine how executives feel concerning the merits of group management versus individual management:

This survey indicates a strong preference for the plural executive only in the settling of jurisdictional questions, with a prominent place in the formulation of objectives, and some usefulness in planning, control, administration, and communication. But the emphasis on the superiority of individual action in practically every function of management is pronounced (54, p. 352).

A further illustration from The Lincoln Lords bears out the findings in this survey. Frank Kennan, factory or production manager for the Coastal Foods Company, in an attempt to persuade Lord that he should accept the presidency of Coastal, attributes some of the company's problems to a form of group management:

'You're what this company needs, Mr. Lord--somebody to get things going down the right track again. What we've been trying--Alf and I double-teaming it--well, it just doesn't work. Maybe I'm wrong--you hear a lot of talk these days about group management--but for my dough, running a company has to be a one-man job . . . . Oh, I don't mean that the president of a company can't use everybody's ideas, sure you can--and he has to delegate responsibility--but unless you've got that one strong



guy sitting up there in the driver's seat, you just aren't going to get anywhere. You can't run a company by compromise. Somebody's got to call the shots. You can think you're going right down the line, everybody pulling together and headed in the same direction, but sooner or later you come to a fork in the road. Then there has to be somebody to say whether you're going right or left--or maybe back up and turn around' (42, p. 141).

Kira Zurich, owner of Coastal Foods, appeals to Lord in much the same vein as Kennan. When her husband died and she was faced with the problem of what to do with the company, Mrs. Zurich was convinced by a friend to sit as president of the organization merely as a figurehead, allowing Kennan and Swann to continue running the company exactly as her husband had. Regarding this state of affairs she relates:

. . . I know now how impossible that was. They're both fine men, able and competent and loyal, but without leadership . . . I should have known--I've seen it so often in other organizations--no matter how good your people are, no matter how many committees you appoint or how many charts you draw, there has to be that one right man up at the top or it never works out. It's like a ship without a captain--sooner or later you run on the rocks . . . . (42, pp. 124-125).

Staffing.--Several aspects of the staffing function are brought out in the pages of The Lincoln Lords. One is particularly interesting.

Employees of long standing who have ceased to contribute in a positive fashion to the objectives of the organization--often for reasons beyond their control--present a particularly sticky personnel problem in some instances. Companies with conscience hesitate to fire these individuals because of their

past records of performance and loyalty; and even from a less humanitarian point of view, the morale problem such an action might precipitate with other employees could prove to be an important deterrent. Some companies "kick the employee upstairs"--a promotion in name only to a position with no responsibility or authority. Others offer early retirement. This latter possibility Hawley explores.

Alfred Swann, office manager of Coastal Foods, has become obsessed with the idea that his young assistant Joel Morris is gradually edging him out of the organization. "Grasping at straws" for proof of the ideas he has been harboring, Swann vehemently confronts Lord with Lord's plan for the new executive offices at Coastal Foods. "He flourished the paper as if it were a battle banner. 'Do you think I'm a fool? Do you think I can't read? Do you think I don't know what you're trying to do to me?'" (42, p. 445).

The simple fact that the architects had lettered young Morris' name into an office connected by an adjoining door to the office of the president sent Swann into this bitter tirade. The student of business might note in this illustration not only a case leading to the suggestion of early retirement, but dramatic presentation of the employee exhibiting unwise behavior as a symptom of emotional stress--a topic touched upon in most personnel texts (19, p. 423; 8, p. 451).

Following this heated encounter, Swann has a nearly fatal automobile accident, and it is during his stay in the hospital that Lord discusses the problem with Keenan. Keenan, when asked his advice concerning the early retirement of Swann, reports a similar occurrence with Swann some time earlier and replies solidly:

'Oh, he'll get himself under control, or at least I hope he will, but as far as his staying on here is concerned--'. He shook his head. "The more responsibility you give Joel, the worse it's going to be--salt in an old wound that's never going to heal--and you can't hold Joel down any longer. It's going to be no kindness to Alf to keep him on. Another blow-up like this and he'll crack for good' (42, p. 449).

Directing--A relatively current topic of interest within the realm of the directing function of managers deals with the motivation of scientific and technical personnel. One management study suggests four sources of strain for scientists:

(1) conflict between the business goals of the organization and the professional goals of scientists (2) conflict between what the scientists feel they should be doing as scientists, and what the company expects of them, (3) organizational and individual conflicts caused by the uncertainties of scientific work, and (4) strain and conflict resulting from the adjustments and defenses the scientists make to meet these problems (61, p. 394).

In the novel, the director of research at a pharmaceutical house elucidates the company side of this problem when he makes the following comments to this colleague and employee, Dr. Perrill:

'The scientific quality of your work is quite satisfactory. You're an excellent technician--we have no complaint whatsoever on that score--but you seem to be having a hard

time fitting in here. This isn't an endowed institution, you know. We have to pay our own way. We do as much basic research as we can afford, and now and then we're able to bring out something that gives us prestige even if we lose money on it, but there has to be a limit on that sort of thing. I know you'd like to forget the commercial side. So would I. Who wouldn't? But if we did, we'd bankrupt the company, the lab would close, and then where would we be?' (42, pp. 267-268).

Dr. Perrill, when thus confronted directly with a choice between the company and science, elects to stay with the pharmaceutical house and engage in as much pure research as his job will allow. In this confrontation between science and business, Hawley apparently takes the businessman's view that the business goals of the organization must take precedence over the professional goals of scientists when scientists make their own personal decisions to work for the business organization rather than for an endowed institution.

#### Summary Comments

Since the primary action in The Lincoln Lords centers around Lord's efforts to get the Coastal Foods Company back on its feet, it is understandable that situations illustrative of the planning and organizing functions of management appear in the novel so frequently. The specific examples cited are only a few of the many which can be discovered in the book.

But the student stands to gain even more than added insight into the processes of management by reading Hawley's work. He gets the human-interest angle of the highly paid

executive out of a job and unable to seek employment through regular channels. He explores attitudes concerning the social responsibility of the businessman when Lord makes the public appeal to consumers not to use the new baby food. And he suffers the pain of anti-Semitic prejudice. All in all, the student feels the management processes in a living environment fraught with all the interdependencies and extenuating circumstances which do exist.

### The Absence of a Cello

#### About the Author

Ira Wallach is one of the few writers considered in this study whose biography includes no notation of business experience whatsoever. Born in New York in 1913, Wallach attended Cornell University for one year and served in the Pacific theater more than two years during World War II. He is now a full-time writer and dramatist with a number of screen plays and musicals to his credit (27, p. 429).

Referred to as "a working humorist and a good one" (74, p. 9), Wallach has authored several satirical novels including Hopalong Freud, How to Pick a Wedlock, and Muscle Beach.

#### Summary of Novel Content

In The Absence of a Cello Wallach has taken within his comic province the role of the scientist in business and his

problems with psychological testing. Andrew Pilgrim, a thermonuclear physicist owing to the government a debt of \$133,000 "plus some small change," decides to sell his brain to Baldwin-Nelson, a big business manufacturer of refrigerators. The decision is not so simple, however. Baldwin-Nelson sends Otis Clifton, head of personnel, to "catalog the whole man." The "grand inquisition" is designed to catalog Pilgrim's attitudes and temperament, and to reveal his extroversion and introversion ratings.

During the preparation for Clifton's visit, Pilgrim receives aid from his prospective son-in-law--the epitome of "the organization man." The son-in-law instructs Pilgrim to cover up or remove from his library such books as The Corporate Conspiracy and others published by Andrew's wife, a medieval scholar. Pilgrim rescues from the incinerator a Saturday Evening Post with a Norman Rockwell cover and leaves open a copy of McCall's to an article claiming that all diseases can be cured. These magazines replace the racing forms; and the piano replaces the cello, "a symbol of emotional irresponsibility."

Wallach introduces a number of secondary characters to round out his farce. Perry Blewitt, the prospective son-in-law and student at the Wharton School of Finance, and Andrew's wife Celia join the Littlewoods--Emma, who fruitfully practices the art of shoplifting, and Grant, who plays the horses and

hooky from work. Andrew's sister Marian Jellicoe, the chemist, is cast in an interesting role opposite Otis Clifton.

#### Opinions of Literary Critics

The critics appear unanimous in their appraisal of The Absence of a Cello. An "elegant satire" (56, p. 27), "Wallach's latest (and best) book" (10, p. 18), "Short, witty, polished, delightful" (102, p. 271) are representative comments.

Morgan summarizes his review by saying:

In "The Absence of a Cello" there are a gentleness and warmth to his anger as well as his wit. There are also bite and substance. Unlike recent authors who have tilted at the same windmill, Mr. Wallach manages to retain his sense of proportion . . . and what is perhaps more important . . . his sense of humor. The result is a delightful one-two punch to the solar plexus of that current literary villain, conformity (74, p. 9).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

In The Absence of a Cello, the student is subjected to a completely different experience compared to that which he gains by reading the other novels considered in this study. Wallach's accomplishment in this work has done for fiction what The Peter Principle has done for non-fiction. A steady diet of satire can be quite depressing, but an occasional novel of the caliber of Wallach's should certainly offer the student of management some interesting food for thought.

Authors of most personnel texts (8, 19, 126) conclude that psychological tests, despite their inherent weaknesses,

are among the best selection tools a manager has when he uses them properly. In light of the severely unfavorable criticism these selection devices have received in recent years, however, the student needs to be well aware of their shortcomings.

Entire books and numerous articles have been written to expose some of the fallacies of psychological testing (7, 37, 49, 3, 58). Most critics are particularly concerned because they think that the tests promote conformity, invade personal privacy, discriminate against certain individuals and groups, and leave room for cheating.

William H. Whyte in The Organization Man is particularly adamant about psychological testing. In his chapter on "How Good an Organization Man Are You?" Whyte notes:

Now in regular use are tests which tell in decimal figures a man's degree of radicalism versus conservatism, his practical judgment, his social judgment, the amount of perseverance he has, his stability, his contentment index, his hostility to society, his personal sexual behavior--and now some psychologists are tinkering with a test of a sense of humor (121, p. 191).

In an attempt to counter the effect of some of these tests, Whyte supplies details on "How to Cheat on Personality Tests." The following two basic rules to follow when in doubt about how to answer a specific question on a personality test he offers:

- (1) When asked for word associations or comments about the world, give the most conventional, run-of-the-mill pedestrian answer possible.



- (2) To settle on the most beneficial answer to any question, repeat to yourself:
- (a) I loved my father and my mother, but my father a little bit more.
  - (b) I like things pretty well the way they are.
  - (c) I never worry much about anything.
  - (d) I don't care for books or music much.
  - (e) I love my wife and children.
  - (f) I don't let them get in the way of company work (121, pp. 449-450).

The preparations for the visit of Otis Clifton, filled with both overt and implied criticism of the entire selection process, vividly illuminate much of what Whyte attacks in The Organization Man:

Andrew learned that Mr. Clifton would likely attempt to determine his degree of radicalism, and when Andrew protested that he was non-political, Perry shook his head. 'That's non-acceptance,' he explained, 'and non-acceptance is a form of radicalism.' Andrew also discovered that he had a contentment index and a hostility index, two psychological appendages that grow in the human body. 'Let me warn you,' said Perry, 'he'll try to find out if you have any feelings of hostility toward society' (116, p. 56).

At one point Perry is fearful that Pilgrim will not be asked to complete a questionnaire. "Not to utilize questionnaires was a breach of accepted practice like fee-splitting or committing abortions" (116, p. 120). The questionnaire ultimately comes, however, and Pilgrim complies:

He completed the rest of the questionnaire with a series of dishonest answers demanded by dishonest questions. He knew that as a scientist Baldwin-Nelson would allow him

a few eccentricities--the exact number was doubtless in some personnel manual--and it would even be dangerous to omit them. The lack of the standard number of eccentricities might brand him as unstable or as a calculating fraud (116, pp. 155-156).

The pointed jabs at psychological testing throughout the novel are, of course, aimed at the conformity which some critics believe the business organization demands.

The Grand Inquisitor Clifton even admits to searches for conformity:

Clifton nodded soberly. 'Indeed we do need predictable minds. How else could we staff our sales and management departments?' You see, there's a recipe for some executive personnel just as there is for sour-milk pancakes. Take a small mind, beat it lightly, fold in a teaspoon of chronic self-satisfaction, a pound of insufferable egomania, a dash of fear bordering on terror, and the conviction that any man who likes music is sexually suspect' (116, p. 143).

When questioned about other qualities that go into an efficient management, Clifton adds, "I omitted the ability to contact call girls . . . . Management is someone with enough money to buy brains" (116, pp. 143-144). At an earlier point Clifton offers hope when he stresses that "Baldwin-Nelson welcomes the questioning mind." He kills that hope, however, when he adds, "provided it asks the same questions we ask" (116, p. 81).

In repeatedly calling attention to the conformity demanded by the business organization, Wallach focuses his satire on some attitudes concerning the traits that are characteristic of the businessman. For example Littlewood, while explaining

to Pilgrim how he increased his personal income over seven hundred per cent in three years, boasts:

'Simple. I suffered fools endlessly. I played the buffoon and the hearty handshaker. I tooted tin horns at the boring revels of middle-aged rakes. I've even boasted about my sexual prowess to prove I'm a good American, God help me' (116, p. 39).

Wallach's ironic comments about Perry Blewitt further indicate this attitude:

Perry was preparing to be a leader of men, a maker of decisions, a delegater of authority, and a definite morale factor. He saw himself bullying, cajoling, wheedling, and promising, all with immensely flexible talent, as the graph-line on the sales chart of some still unknown corporation continued to soar like the lark (116, p. 43).

#### Summary Comments

The Absence of a Cello is not a novel in which the student can find illustrations of numerous problems and practices of management. He sees only the psychological testing phase of the staffing process depicted; and that phase is held up to ridicule. The novel does, nevertheless, have relevance for the student of business administration. Since the business organization is often attacked for demanding conformity, the student should be aware of what conformity is and its effects upon other people. And the medium of satire can often prove very effective in imparting criticism--particularly for the sophisticated reader.

## The View from the Fortieth Floor

### About the Author

A 1938 summa cum laude graduate of Harvard University, Theodore Harold White boasts a wide range of experience in the publishing industry. For Time magazine he served as Far East correspondent; for New Republic, editor; for the Overseas News Agency, as chief European correspondent; and for The Reporter, chief European correspondent and national correspondent. In addition to working as a free-lance writer, White has also served as a consultant to the Columbia Broadcasting System and Atheneum Publishers (27, p. 1000).

Author White has received numerous awards and honors. These include two Pulitzer Prizes--one for general non-fiction (1962) and one for the novel, The Making of the President (1960). His novels, Thunder Out of China, Fire in the Ashes, and The Mountain Road were all Book-of-the-Month selections. The View from the Fortieth Floor was selected by the Literary Guild (27, p. 1000).

### Summary of Novel Content

In The View from the Fortieth Floor, Theodore White writes about what he knows best--the publishing industry. The fortieth floor of a lavish high-rise office building houses the executive offices of General American Publishing Company. John Ridgely Warren serves as president.

In the preface, White notes that he has "witnessed from within the collapse of three great publishing enterprises and observed, from the close fringes of friendship, at least as many other such disasters." He goes on to say, however, that though these experiences have provided him with "various suggestions for this story," his characters and events in the novel are entirely imaginary (120).

White's disclaimer has not, however, kept critics (45, 55, 109) from making comparisons. The collapse of Collier's and Woman's Home Companion a few years ago have been cited as sources for the central idea of the novel.

The major action in The View from the Fortieth Floor is "Ridge" Warren's attempt to save from bankruptcy two ailing magazines, Trumpet and Gentlewoman. He spends all the money he can raise in "engineering" large circulations to attract the advertising dollars which actually generate profit. The advertising dollars do not materialize rapidly enough, however, and Warren is faced with the sad task of ending the two magazines which had once been among the most influential in America. General American Publishing will remain intact, though, with two highly profitable divisions--radio and textbooks.

In reporting Warren's forays in search of operating capital, White introduces the reader to a number of interesting businessmen, from the fatherly millionaire whose sons hold his

purse strings to the brutal financial manipulator. And the major character comes face-to-face with several conflicts of value and morals.

#### Opinions of Literary Critics

With two notable exceptions, the critics have been none too kind to The View from the Fortieth Floor. The reviewer for The New Yorker begins with "A long and uninspiring novel," (114, p. 155) and Time's critic concludes, "As a roman à clef, or key-to-reality novel, the book unlocks some fairly intriguing trade gossip. But as literature, View from the Fortieth Floor lacks a consistent viewpoint, simply upends a wastebasket of facts and scans the litter like tea leaves of doom" (55, p. 101).

John Chamberlain notes "no particular depth to Mr. White's characterizations," but credits the author with a story which "artfully catches the tremors that shake a great publishing organization when it is about to disappear" (18, p. 3) In attempting to explain why the novel is not a better one, Granville Hicks points out that "John Ridgely Warren never becomes fully credible . . . the fundamental reason . . . is that White's imagination was fettered by facts" (45, p. 18).

Of a more favorable nature are the reviews from The New York Times Book Review and The Christian Science Monitor. Gerald Carson credits White with fashioning a "novel of absorbing interest . . . skillfully plotted, and building

steadily to a towering climax (17, p. 5). And Earl Foell concludes, "Despite its unevenness, this Literary Guild Selection for June is probably the most searching fictional look at the inside of the magazine publishing world since John Brooks's 'The Big Wheel' of 10 years ago" (30, p. 17).

Even the reviews which are predominantly negative, however, can be perceived in a somewhat different light. Though it might be well for a student to uncover revelations of interest in management in novels which are accorded high literary significance, this is not always possible. And too, as the preceding excerpts indicate, the question of literary significance is not always decided unanimously. The majority of the reviews for White's book, positive and negative, do admit, nonetheless, that the author has presented some informative, factual material in fictional format. The following illustrations support this statement.

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

Planning.--Most management texts in discussing the planning function devote space to consideration of the creative element in the decision-making process. "Brainstorming," popularized by Alex F. Osborn, is one of the best known aids to group creativity. Osborn, a business leader and one of the founding partners of the advertising agency, Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osborn, is now president of the Creative Education

Foundation. Basically a thinking aid, brainstorming as conceived by Osborn is the creation of ideas by cooperative, uninhibited group effort.

Osborn recommends that a group consider only a simple and specific problem at one time. The members are asked to think up individually and collectively as many solutions as they possibly can. Judicial judgment and criticism of ideas are withheld until after the session, as criticism tends to stifle creativity. "Freewheeling" is welcomed. The theory is that it is much easier to "tame down than to think up." The sheer quantity of ideas generated is a vital factor, and participants are encouraged to suggest combinations of ideas or improvements on ideas of others (83, p. 84).

One management specialist notes:

Executives have used this technique on a wide variety of problems, including: how to find new uses for glass in autos, how to improve a company newspaper, how to design a new tire-making machine, how to improve highway signs, and how to cut down absenteeism. An hour session is likely to produce anywhere from 60 to 150 ideas. Most suggestions will be impractical; others will be trite. But a few of the ideas will be worth serious consideration (80, p. 352).

White's eighteen-page narrative of the "story conference" offers a stimulating account of a typical brainstorming session. The magazine editors are gathered "supposedly contemplating Christmas." The "free-wheeling" welcomed in a session of this type is evident in the comment by Tennyson, the editor of the Science and Health section of the magazine:



'I don't want to interrupt this flow of wit, but since we've gotten to 'New Glands for Old Husbands,' [the impetus for this whole line of thought was a Christmas-Gift-for-Father layout] I shall now proceed as I have each month for the past year to insist the best story I have is just that. Why can't we run it? . . . 'Yes,' said Tennyson firmly, 'if we're looking for 'sell,' there it is, the best story in my inventory--'The Male Menopause'' (120, p. 68).

The quantity of ideas in such a brainstorming session becomes more important than the quality. And combinations of two or more ideas together appear in response to the comment, "We'll need a good by-line, of course, to sell the story on the cover, an author whose name guarantees sales, and I was hoping today's conference would suggest a writer--" (120, p. 74). Harry Truman is dismissed as "too political for Christmas," and Eleanor Roosevelt as "slipping, controversial, too." Cardinal Spellman "doesn't sell west of the Rockies." A mischievous clincher comes with, "I've got it! Walter Lippman ghosts the piece and Frankie Sinatra sings it. How's that? Certified Grade A plus certified sell?" (120, p. 75).

Organizing.--A significant part of the organization function of management pertains to the composition of the Board of Directors. In discussing "The Corporation in Practice," Ernest Dale notes that members for corporate boards emerge from a variety of places. One important type of director is the individual who represents a bank or some other financial institution which has been instrumental in financing the company. "If a company borrows money for expansion, for example,

the institution that lends it may insist on having its own representatives on the board to act as watchdogs" (23, p. 76).

In View from the Fortieth Floor, Ridge Warren, desperate for operating capital, turns to Jack Raven, "Real Estate Entrepreneur, Broadway Angel, Speculator, Baseball Magnate, Art Collector." The only business Raven is in "solidly" is real estate. All other pursuits he terms "horse manure," but adds, "I do it for fun. I don't want to make money, but I don't intend to lose money" (120, p. 262).

After assuring Warren that "my boys downstairs will check this out with a fine-tooth comb before they let me in," (120, p. 262) Raven voices his ultimatum:

. . . I'm not putting three or four million into anything unless I have a say about it . . . I've got a boy, my son, Henry. Two years out of Yale and a nice kid and not one dammed bit interested in real estate . . . I have a feeling that your shop is just the place for him . . . The place to get his training is at the top. Henry's twenty-three now. He can't spend all his life working his way up--I did that for him . . . I think the place for Henry is on the Board, and he ought to be made a vice-president or something so he can watch it every day . . . Yeah, on the Board . . . why not? Young blood on the Board. The more I think of it the better I like it. He represents three or four million dollars of new money if he sits on that Board, if my people let me pump it in on this real-estate deal (120, pp. 263-264).

The preceding illustration concerning the composition of the board of directors brings to mind the same kind of question raised in The Lincoln Lords, "Where does the work really get done?" or "Who is actually responsible for making the decisions?" White's novel gives a similar answer to the question.

Ridge Warren is forcefully confronted by Walt Morrissey, an influential board member, with the following exclamation:

'Board meetings don't do a goddamned bit of good, Warren. You know that. Particularly this Board. It stinks. Jerks. Can't do anything at next month's meeting unless we're set before then, unless we decide what's got to be done, and then we tell them. See?' (120, pp. 11-12).

Management specialists, needless to say, do not recommend that boards of directors function as rubber stamps for the strong executive. Specialists, however, are well aware that many boards do function in just this manner and point this out to students of management by statements similar to the following:

Observation of boards of directors, however, shows that many boards actually do not manage, and corporate boards have often been criticized for this. Instead, managing, in its usual sense, is the job of the president and other chief officers. The separation of ownership and management sometimes makes the inside managerial group all-powerful and the board of directors a legal sham (54, p. 354).

Staffing.--Any unionized organization finds itself faced with staffing problems peculiar to the union-management relationship. The union is a political, economic organization, and the elected leaders of the group must represent the interests of their constituents. One text points out that union leaders with their interests in being reelected often "have to contend with dissident groups within the ranks. They cannot always negotiate a contract with management according to the cold logics of an issue" (8, p. 116).

White alludes to the union at several points in the novel, but he actually deals with union-management relations only in a minor fashion. At one point, however, a discussion between Warren and Bert Hopkins, production vice-president, reveals some characteristic negotiation maneuvers. Hopkins by "holding his finger to the wind" discovers the union's objective for the forthcoming contract negotiation and reports:

'Well, they're going to ask another fourteen per cent jump and a whole passel of fringe benefits. I want to be tough this time. Not a nickel more than a six per cent raise. I start by offering them four per cent, then, later, I'll close at six per cent, maybe seven per cent raise, see? But I want to be sure you people in New York back me up' (120, p. 130).

When Warren snaps, "You tell them any raise at all now will put us out of business and them out of work," Hopkins throws back his head, laughs, and replies:

'You don't mind my saying so, Will, no offense intended, you sit here with figures, but I handle men. That's the first thing anybody says in union negotiation. I've been saying that to them for eighteen years now. They don't believe it any more than I do. Got to give them something. The only question is how little we can get away with without getting them hung on a strike. Stitch in time saves nine, I always say. Once these unions get hooked in a negotiating position, they sometimes have to go out on strike without wanting to themselves. You better leave the union to me, I know them' (120, p. 131).

White portrays the attitude of the union member later in the novel when one of the workers asserts, "They can't scare the union by clearing out inventory. I know they're cutting down

the paper stock just to scare us. They try a new trick every time it comes to negotiation" (120, p. 242).

Directing.--In choosing a leadership style appropriate for a particular organization, the effective manager must consider the morale factor. Though recent investigations have demonstrated that there is no simple relationship between morale and productivity, numerous investigations do indicate a positive correlation between high morale and low turnover and low absenteeism. And most management specialists agree that "Worker loyalty and stability are important" (8, p. 462).

The problem of morale can become particularly acute during periods of change. For example, Frank Russell, Chief of Advertising Sales, in reporting to Warren his problems with "demoralized," drinking salesmen who infect the other salesmen evokes the following response:

'Fire him!' broke in Warren. 'Fire Merrill.'  
'No,' said Russel, 'I can't. Because I have at least thirty people down there on the advertising floor who've been giving their living guts to this firm for twenty or twenty-five years. I arrived in January. I'm still an outsider. These people have kids who were born on paychecks from this firm. They expect to send those kids to college on paychecks from this firm. If I fire an old-timer like Merrill because he's cracked under strain, I shake the morale of all the rest who think this place is home . . . .' (120, p. 21).

One of the thorniest problems of direction stems from breakdowns in communication. A survey by the National Industrial Conference Board summarizes communication barriers in

in three major groups: (1) barriers arising from the fact that individuals differ particularly regarding perceptions and semantics; (2) barriers arising from the company's psychological climate stemming from the personality of executives plus the influence of special groups and their effects which stultify communications; and (3) barriers that are largely mechanical in the sense that they stem from lack of proper facilities or means of communication (19, p. 341).

A lack of definite plans can pose a serious mechanical barrier to communication, according to one text. "Coordination between executives and managers [front-line supervisors] is essential to having a presentation that will be complete and in proper focus in relation to the total operation of the organization" (19, p. 346). That this lack of coordination between executives and managers can pose serious problems is brought out quite vividly in the novel. Warren confides in his old friend David Eliot about the severe financial strain under which the corporation is operating. And Eliot, presently political correspondent for Trumpet, persuades Warren to allow him to "feel the pulse" of the magazine employees concerning a voluntary pay cut. When Eliot speaks with Tom Foley, Managing Editor, Foley explodes:

'Hell, everybody knows we're in trouble,' said Foley, 'but if he wants to cut salaries, why didn't he call me in? I'm the Managing Editor, goddamit. I'm not bitching about his talking to you, Dave, you're his friend, but how am I supposed to run his magazine

for him if I never know what's going on? All I make of it is that we're in a hell of a jam, which I already knew, and he wants to cut salaries. But instead of laying it on the line, he calls you in and winds you up to volunteer for a cut--he wants us to form a cheering section at our own funeral' (120, p. 205).

All management texts that discuss directing must deal with motivation; and an understanding of human needs is an essential element in comprehending motivation. One highly popular theory of motivation is based on a classification of needs. A. H. Maslow groups human needs into five categories, with the basic, lower-order needs listed first:

- (1) The physiological needs.
- (2) The safety needs.
- (3) The belongingness and love needs.
- (4) The esteem needs.
- (5) The need for self-actualization (realization)  
(69, pp. 80-106).

According to Maslow's theory, a satisfied need is not a motivator; therefore as an individual satisfies his basic needs or needs of lower order, the higher needs begin to dominate.

In the novel, Ridge Warren reveals the impact of these individual needs in his private musings over the job offers which have come his way:

Star Airlines had felt him out for a Vice-Presidency of Overseas Operations. The salary was good; and even more generous in terms of expense account, stock options, and retirement benefits. But there had been no lure but money in Star Airlines' offer . . . . He might have responded to the feelers from the Mid-West Foundation. But the Mid-West sat in Chicago--safe, dignified, goodwilled and sterile . . . . It was too early in life to join something like the Mid-West Foundation; it was like settling for the Civil Service, twenty years before; you did not decide, or shape things.

Which left General American Publishing . . . .  
 Their situation was bad, he knew, as soon as he first  
 studied their statements. They were losing money.  
 Circulation was down. Advertising was down. Pro-  
 duction was obsolete. Deadwood crowned the magazines.  
 Deadwood encumbered the Board . . . but the gamble!  
 Oh, the gamble! If you could pull this together,  
 then the very rot would serve as pumice to polish the  
 glow he could make of it (120, pp. 151-153).

Warren particularizes, therefore, the importance of self-  
 realization or self-actualization in his personal hierarchy  
 of needs.

#### Summary Comments

The View from the Fortieth Floor bristles with situations  
 which bring to mind problems and practices of management.  
 Various aspects of the directing process are particularly  
 numerous. The examples cited here are merely representative,  
 moreover; the novel actually contains many more instances  
 which could be mentioned.

Two additional values of this novel are also worth  
 mentioning. White offers an astute commentary on the com-  
 plexities of modern magazine publishing and on the problems  
 encountered in the search for financial backing of a prom-  
 ising, but temporarily insolvent organization. And in probing  
 the area of social responsibility, White portrays Ridge Warren  
 using methods bordering on the unethical to secure severance  
 pay for his non-unionized white-collar staff. The deal has  
 already been closed for a competing publisher to buy General  
 American's ailing magazines. Union contracts assure the



blue-collar workers severance pay. White-collar workers, however, have no such assurance. Feeling strongly that the non-unionized workers are as deserving of severance pay as the unionized, Warren does the wrong thing for the right reason. He operates quickly, behind the back of the imminent purchaser, to construct a contract providing severance pay for the white-collar staff. Successful in his efforts, Warren exhibits a strong sense of moral responsibility and emerges with a feeling of having taken the right stand.

Some students might read this situation as romantic nonsense, without any parallel to actual business practice. Hopefully, however, Warren's attitude will inculcate in the student the idea that a good businessman can have, or even should have, a sense of moral and social responsibility.

### Mid-Century

#### About the Author

Though John Dos Passos once aspired to be an architect, he never entered the field but spent a great part of his life writing and traveling. He studied in Spain; drove ambulances in France and Italy; wrote in Portugal and Madrid; traveled with a relief mission in the Near East; toured the U. S. S. R.; and worked as a correspondent in South and Central America (27, p. 261).

Always an advocate of personal freedom and individual liberty, Dos Passos was arrested twice for demonstrating in

behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti. Following his trip to Harlan County, Kentucky, in 1931 to report on the labor disputes, he was indicted for criminal syndicalism (27, p. 261).

A member of several professional, artistic, and philanthropic organizations, Dos Passos was a three-time recipient of Guggenheim fellowships; and in 1957, he received the National Institute of Arts and Letters Gold Medal Award for fiction (27, p. 261).

Before his death at the age of seventy-four in 1970, this social critic had written over thirty major works of fiction, numerous interpretative essays, and several plays. Robie Macauley in a biographical sketch of Dos Passos says that much of the writer's work is:

. . . bound to taste rather stale to this generation, a spectacle not current enough to be news and not quite old enough to be history . . . . But, given enough distance, Dos Passos will have his day again. How he will be read in another time is hard to say . . . . I should say that it will be less as a social interpreter than as a primitive portraitist of American lives during a certain time' (27, p. 262).

#### Summary of Novel Content

With the same basic technique which proved so successful in U. S. A., John Dos Passos exposed in Mid-Century the racketeering and corruption in the labor unions. As he launched scathing attacks on big business in the U. S. A. trilogy, he in turn does the same for big unions in this novel.

The obituary for Dos Passos refers to the writer as one devoted to "works of socially committed topical fiction" who "began on the radical left and ended on the conservative right but was always essentially on the side of the individual resisting monolithic pressure" (76, p. 461). It is his underlying premise in Mid-Century that the individual worker fails to gain the power and privileges he seeks through the labor movement. Big unions make the gains, but the individual worker merely changes bosses. Instead of being subservient to business, the laborer becomes subservient to the union leaders.

Twenty-five "documentaries" provide the framework for Mid-Century. Similar to the "newsreels" of U. S. A., these sections open with brief quotations from headlines, news stories, and advertising blurbs to create an atmosphere and set the scene for the impressionistic biographies and fictional narratives which follow.

Among the fifteen thumbnail biographies of influential Americans are rather acid sketches of labor leaders Harry Bridges, Dan Tobin, Dave Beck, and James Hoffa. Generals Douglas MacArthur and William F. Dean are lauded for their integrity and rugged individualism; and Senator John McClellan, the Democrat from Arkansas whose committee spotlighted union corruption, is drawn in a very favorable portrait.

Dos Passos' fictional narratives reinforce the points he makes with his nonfiction. "Investigator's Notes" depict individuals under pressure from labor racketeers. Blackie Bowman, conceded to be the novel's most convincing, alive and sympathetic character (96, 95), is a former revolutionary syndicalist (member of the I. W. W.) who lies dying in a veterans' hospital. Defeated in virtually everything, he represents the one whom time and events have made obsolete.

Korean veteran Terry Bryant is the young, idealistic labor organizer who sees his local "sold out" to a corrupt clique and moves on in defeat as a cab driver. In this position, Bryant's story coincides with that of Will Jenks, operator of a small taxi company attempting to defy the monopolistic pressure of a large car manufacturer. Among the other characters rounding out the author's presentation is Jasper Milliron, father-in-law of Will Jenks. Milliron provides a rather different picture as the intelligent and constructive businessman who attempts technological innovation only to be thwarted in his efforts by greedy and power-hungry financiers.

#### Opinions of Literary Critics

In assessing Mid-Century, the critics unavoidably turn to Dos Passos' U. S. A. trilogy, since the two are very similar in technique. Though none of the reviewers term

Mid-Century as effective as its earlier counterpart, very few dismiss it as insignificant.

The most negative review comes from the pen of John Gross, who says, "All one can do for the sake of the man who once wrote Manhattan Transfer and The Big Money [one part of the U. S. A. trilogy] is look the other way (37, p. 614).

More representative are the following comments: "While there is much of the old fire and intensity here of his famed U. S. A., the book has considerably less vigor or freshness" (62, p. 5); "He cannot now reach the height he reached in U. S. A. but 'Midcentury' shows how much there is that he can still do well . . . . The narratives are based on a knowledge of industrial life few novelists have. And tired and hopeless as he may be, Dos Passos is still a man of solid integrity, saying exactly what he thinks" (44, p. 26); and "Within its limitations, this is a crudely forceful work, full of the astonishing, exact knowledge Mr. Dos Passos appears to secrete on everything from union electioneering to flour milling processes--a wealth of information that becomes a sort of poetry by sheet Whitmanesque proliferation" (64, p. 5).

A positive endorsement by The New York Times Book Review can do much for a novel. Mid-Century gets this endorsement in a page-one article. Harry T. Moore concludes his lengthy review by placing Dos Passos' "new novel of our own time" in

a category reserved for works to be considered as "serious literature," and "certainly . . . as one of the few genuinely good American novels of recent years" (73, p. 51).

A final comment worthy of note credits Dos Passos with a novel "in the best tradition of talented and morally concerned journalism." Critic Stanley Rowland summarizes his ideas by saying:

While the book often lacks the consistent, probing exploration of the nature of human character, which distinguishes a first-rate novel, it has the strength of good journalism: it documents our times, it tells what people do to each other, and parts of it make you mad enough to rush out and change things (95, p. 654).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

Now that unions have become an established and accepted part of our industrial society with their collective bargaining rights protected by law, it is essential that management make every effort to work with those unions that may represent its employees . . . . In order to develop a working relationship with a union and in order to bargain effectively with its representatives, management should possess some knowledge about the objectives and problems of the union. While it may be difficult for some managers to avoid becoming resentful when union representatives challenge their actions and encroach upon what have previously been the prerogatives of management these managers will be likely to cope with such problems more effectively if they have sufficient understanding of and empathy for the union's position (19, pp. 485-486).

The above comments, from a standard text on personnel management, introduce a discussion of the functions of a union, the growth of organized labor, union organization and

leadership, government legislation and its impact, and current problems and goals of unions.

Primarily through the eyes of the rank-and-file union member, the student can see many of these topics vividly described in Mid-Century. Admittedly, Dos Passos is leveling a scathing attack in his novel against the corruption and racketeering in American unionism. Underlying this, however, is a strong belief in the right of the employees to take collective action; and the author presents in a fascinating framework innumerable situations evidencing acute insight into the problems of labor and unionism in the United States.

Among the first questions posed to a student in his studies of labor-management relations is, "Why do employees join a union?" "To gain greater bargaining power with the employer" is quite often the first response to such a question, but among the other more important reasons is "to minimize favoritism and discrimination."

With regard to this latter motivation to join unions, one management specialist points out:

Supervisors must make a great many decisions which affect the pay, status, position, and work of their subordinates. Many of these decisions are highly subjective in nature. They are influenced by the personal relationships existing between the supervisor and each of his employees. Sometimes when one man is granted a larger wage increase than others, they feel that favoritism may have had a part in the decision. Unions press for equality of treatment. For example, one of their maxims is 'One job, one rate' (8, p. 83).

Terry Bryant's early experience in Mid-Century illustrates this particular motivation to join unions. In relating Bryant's efforts to organize the workers in a rubber manufacturing plant, Dos Passos brings to light the following abuses:

The foremen were powerful men in that plant. Some of them did a little moneylending on the side. The one they called Duke, a big swarthy hunky with a black mustache over his mouth, was supposed to hold mortgages on the homes of half the men in his department. Men hinted to Terry that Duke took a kickback whenever he got them a raise in classification. There was favoritism in wage scales and even in piece work rates. The slogan of Terry's that went over biggest in inducing the men to sign up for the election was: 'Equal pay for equal work' (25, p. 195).

Throughout the novel, the student sees evidence of the importance unions place on different bargaining issues. He can read in a textbook that "union security arrangements" constitute one of the principal substantive issues on which labor and management bargain. "Unions nearly always demand contractual protection for their existence as the bargaining agent in a company. They usually seek the maximum form allowed by law, namely, the union shop" (8, p. 134).

From the novel, then, the student can see Walter Reuther's efforts to achieve these goals for the United Auto Workers. Dos Passos' presentation at this point is, however, factual rather than fictional, as he is dealing with a biographical sketch of the leading figure in the auto union. After noting



the "institution-building" of John L. Lewis in the CIO, Dos Passos relates:

Franklin Roosevelt and John L. were working at cross purposes, but between them they convinced the automobile industry that unions were here to stay. Ford's reversed its policy overnight. Harry Bennett agreed to negotiate. The National Labor Relations Board held an election in which the UAW won 58,000 out of 80,000 votes cast. Ford's signed, agreed to the union shop, the checkoff, overtime pay, seniority, grievance machinery, everything all down the line (25, p. 140).

Within the biographical sections, from which the preceding quotation was taken, Dos Passos makes some interesting observations about the personalities he presents. Typical is the following statement:

Walter Reuther was an idealist with an institution to build. Building institutions takes special skills. Walter was a quiet family man of blameless life who drank only milk and didn't gamble and never smoked and who didn't give a damn about money and style. He was so convinced of the probity of his own intentions that he never could believe in the probity of people who had other ideas (25, p. 141).

One of the most recent and significant pieces of labor legislation to which the student of management is introduced is the Landrum-Griffin Act of 1959, known as The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act. This law was passed as a result of the McClellan Committee's investigations uncovering and publicizing the racketeering, violence, and lack of democratic procedures in unions in addition to the collusion going on between unions and employers (8, p. 124). A respected author of American labor history writes that the Landrum-Griffin

Act "really deserves the title of 'Hoffa's Act,' for the truculence of the Teamsters' president before the McClellan Committee was probably the decisive element in securing its passage" (85, pp. 206-207).

In his biographical presentations of "Men of Enterprise" (Dan Tobin, Dave Beck, and James Hoffa), Dos Passos offers support for the historian's view:

Hoffa was closemouthed about his own affairs. Only through the probing of an investigating committee did the public learn that through his wife and the wife of an associate he was in the trucking business. Who had a better right? A longhaul enterprise called Test Fleet was so admirably managed that out of a four thousand dollar investment the ladies were said to have received dividends amounting to sixty-two thousand in four years. Tales were told of real estate developments and a loan syndicate and trotting horses and a girls' camp.

Witnesses criticized his style of life. 'Just because I'm in Labor do they expect me to wear baggy pants and drive a three dollar car and live in a four dollar house?' (25, pp. 224-225).

One example after another could be cited from the novel showing practices the Landrum-Griffin Act sought to overcome. For example, from Dos Passos's impressionistic biography of Harry Bridges, the Marxist organizer for the rank-and-file longshoremen, come the problems of the dock workers:

The longshoremen had a union--they called it the blue book--but they grouched that even when racketeers weren't horning in the blue book benefited principally the employers . . . .

Rank and file had no say in the hiring halls . . . .

In the shapeup the dockwallopers stood around all day with their handhooks dangling from the back pockets of their jeans waiting to be hired.

Half the time they had to kick back to the foreman to get to work.

They felt the pinch of the depression. The business agents of the AF of L weren't interested. Not enough money on the waterfront. With the wobblies gone it was the commies who interested themselves in the woes of the rank and file (25, p. 53).

The story of Frank Worthington, who worked his way up to a top position in the international organization of the rubber workers' union, led to the McClellan investigations. Working under the philosophy that "A clean honest administration . . . should stand on its own merits," Worthington prepared charges against Jed Starbright, president of a local in Doylesville, after finding irregularities in his financial reports. Worthington acted in spite of repeated warnings that Starbright led a very powerful political faction within the union.

When Worthington tried to "lay it on the line" to the local members, a bloody foray resulted and Worthington was tried behind closed doors by the executive board. He was accused of "slandering local officials, of conspiring to deprive them of their rights, of bringing the international into disrepute by wild and unproved charges" (25, pp. 132-133).

Worthington's rebuttal to a sympathetic colleague was, "But Grant those guys are crooks. I've got the evidence right here in my safe." With a shrug, Grant replies, "What's the use of evidence if they won't let you present it? You're tryin' to run a labor union like a Sunday School picnic" (25, p. 133). In the final analysis, "the Starbright faction took over the executive committee and removed Frank Worthington

from office. Not militant enough was the story they gave out to the rank and file" (25, p. 133).

The final claim, charging Worthington with a failure to be militant enough, should remind the business student of what he may have learned about the problems of the union officer. One textbook, for example, cautions employers "to recognize the political nature of the union officer's position which at times may force him to make demands that are neither wise nor reasonable." And the authors of this warning go on to point out that:

At times the union officer may have to exhibit an aggressive attitude during sessions with employers in order to duly impress the union members who are present. Table pounding, exaggerated claims, and an outward appearance of belligerency may characterize his behavior while meeting with the employer in the presence of other union members. His private encounters with the employer, on the other hand, may be carried out on an entirely friendly and reasonable basis (19, pp. 497-498).

The short sections interspersed throughout the novel depicting scenes between congressional investigators and informants offer numerous illustrations of corruption at the union local level. In one vignette, a shop steward for the United Auto Workers speaks. He tells of how local elections were rigged by the president, the plant chairman and the group in the office. When a young shop steward and some friends organized a protest group:

Every man who signed that letter of protest was suspended by the union. The checkoff saved them from being fired. According to the Taft-Hartley Law so long as they paid their dues they couldn't be fired . . . . Some of them

were fired by the company at that. There was a colored fellow, one of the best men they had, he's been a committeeman for nine years and still he got fired.

'You can't tell me there isn't collusion between the personnel department and the union officers, I know it's a hard thing to prove but what happened tells the story' (25, p. 429).

At another point in the investigation, the young man confesses:

'The shopstewards have too much power. I ought to know. I'm one myself.' He grinned with a flash of teeth. 'Money's passed under the table for seniority. There's a kind of superseniority the shopsteward can hand out as a bonus. When thousands of people are being laid off a man'll do almost anything to keep his job' (25, p. 430).

Dos Passos provides some interesting looks at the organizational structure of a large international union. For instance, students can read in a management text that though "unions function quite differently" from large corporations because of the power at the union local level, "the organizational structure of a large union does not differ very much from the company flow chart" (35, p. 46; p. 32).

Turning to the novel, the student finds some parallels in Frank Worthington's experiences in organization as vice-president of an international union. Worthington was depended upon . . . "to set up the big office, to find men capable of handling finances; to start departments to handle research in the prevention of accidents, time study, compensation; to find lawyers to draw up sample contracts for negotiating committees" (25, p. 127). In describing the union officer, Dos Passos says, "Frank was a natural born executive. He had

his eye on every administrative detail from the daily bank-balance of the International to the per capita paid by the smallest member union" (25, p. 129). From this description, the student gains reinforcement of another point cited in most management texts: "Men who work their way to the top of the union ladder and hold their positions are as much the executive type as any that may be found in high positions in industry. The rabble-rousing-organizer type rarely, if ever, reaches a high union position" (35, p. 48).

#### Summary Comments

Quite clearly, Mid-Century is a novel from which the student of management can gain much. Through fact juxtaposed with fiction, he sees union-management relations in a vivid setting. He can experience vicariously the efforts of employees to gain recognition for their unions and the frustration and anguish they suffer when those same organizations fall into the hands of corrupt labor leaders and racketeers.

Though Dos Passos places his emphasis on the corruption and racketeering in American unionism, there is much more for the observant reader. Motivating forces affecting labor leaders and rank-and-file employees are placed in perspective; the atmosphere of union organization and collective bargaining is illuminated; and events leading to major labor legislation are vividly drawn. All in all, the student can see dramatically portrayed a significant area of concern for contemporary management.

Youngblood HawkeAbout the Author

The biography of Herman Wouk notes only an indirect contact with the world of business for the author who once stated, "Setting aside the years at war, I have had no other aim or occupation than that of writing; and it is the ambition I had when I was a boy" (94, p. 649).

The son of a Russian-Jewish immigrant parents, Wouk was born in New York City in 1915 and was awarded the B. A. degree in comparative literature and philosophy from Columbia University in 1934. Though the writer's father was a well-known industrialist in the power laundry business, Wouk never joined him. Instead, the young man worked as a "gagman" for radio comedians, a script-writer for the late Fred Allen, and a writer and producer for radio plays to promote war bond sales. Wouk served with the U. S. Navy during World War II, and was a visiting professor at Yeshiva University in New York City (26, p. 468; 94, pp. 649-650).

With four major novels to his credit, all of which have been produced as motion pictures, Wouk has authored several plays and works of non-fiction. He received the Pulitzer Prize for fiction, 1952, for The Cain Mutiny. Each of Wouk's novels has been selected by at least one book club; Youngblood Hawke was both a Reader's Digest and Book-of-the-Month Club selection and was serialized in McCalls.

Summary of Novel Content

Invariably, Youngblood Hawke is referred to as a fictionalized account of the tumultuous life and career of Thomas Wolfe. One critic accuses Wouk of borrowing "almost everything from Wolfe but his cuff links" (111, p. 98).

Arthur Youngblood Hawke, straight from the coal hills of Kentucky, storms his way to almost instant literary success with the publication of his first novel, Alms for Oblivion. The story explores Hawke's rise in the literary world and tells of the shenanigans by which he attempts to provide himself with the million dollars he needs to free his mind for serious work. One critic notes that "The account of his financial entanglements and his heroic efforts to extricate himself, with Internal Revenue people and creditors baying at his heels, achieves genuine dramatic power" (12, p. 36).

Hawke never realizes his dream of writing the Great American Comedy. He dies of a brain disease at the age of thirty-three, still dreaming of a future when he can be financially independent and free to write as he pleases.

Wouk introduces, among other interesting characters, Frieda Winter, the wealthy New York socialite, with whom Hawke has a lengthy, adulterous affair; Jeanne Green, the wise young editor Hawke loves and respects; Sarah Hawke, the author's money-hungry mother with her legal claim against the



trespassing coal company; and Scotty Hoag, the "wheeler-dealer-binness-man" from Hovey, Kentucky, with whom Hawke becomes financially entrapped.

#### Opinions of Literary Critics

The critics offer mixed reviews for Youngblood Hawke. From one side comes the statement that "failure in characterization permeates the novel . . . . And the plotting is as naive as the portraiture" (12, p. 36). Another critic, in contrast, goes so far as to call Herman Wouk "the only living nineteenth century novelist," and lauds the novel by saying, "I loved it, every mad, mad moment of it" (105, p. 355).

To lend validity to the relevance of Wouk's novel for this study, however, are the following representative comments: "Scenes of business acumen, vendetta and sleights of hand form the grand dramatic clashes . . . . As a financial thriller much here is masterly" (2, p. 845); "To be sure Mr. Wouk is interesting about the mechanics of American publishing, not to mention the exploitation, the treachery, the greed of it all" (90, p. 600); and "Consequently (and this is its only real interest) this novel is a microcosm of our time, an unwitting biopsy of the social body that reveals monetary malignancy" (52, p. 24).

The most perceptive review appears in The Christian Science Monitor. Frederick Guidry notes that "what is missing is a

certain profundity, an enriching universality, to go along with the storytelling technique." He, nevertheless, indicates that the novel has some virtue:

Mr. Wouk does plot with inner consistency and sustained imagination which brings a remarkable plausibility to his tale of Gargantuan fiscal folly and supersophisticated romance. The characters are drawn in depth, and the dialogue, whether crude or refined, is set down as if funneled through a lapel microphone (39, p. 7).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

The preceding comments concerning the plot summary of Youngblood Hawke and the opinions of literary critics point quite clearly to one value to be gained by reading the novel. The student gets an excellent inside glimpse at the publishing business and an interesting view of the financial blunders a man can make when he is not "investment-wise" and chooses to speculate on "get-rich-quick schemes."

Illustrations of problems and practices of management are not so numerous in this novel as in some of the previous ones, and the relevant illustrations do not lend themselves well to a point by point connection with management processes. The following unclassified examples are representative of the pertinent business situations, however.

"In a hierarchy every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence." Such is the basic principle Laurence J. Peter derives from the new science he labels "hierarchiology"

and discusses in "tongue-in-cheek" treatment in The Peter Principle. "Percussive sublimation" he notes as "apparent exception No. 1" to the basic principle.

The percussive sublimation, according to Peter, is a pseudo-promotion. Often the employee in question really believes he has received a genuine promotion. The truth is that management has "kicked him upstairs to get him out of the road." The hierarchy, however, is maintained. Management saves face by not having to admit the man was poorly placed in his previous position. And the pseudo-promotion boosts the morale of other staff members, who surmise, "If that character can get a promotion, I can get a promotion" (86, pp. 19-21).

Management textbooks deal with ways to avert this hypocritical situation by properly administered programs of management development. One text outlines the following steps as essential to the success of any management development program:

1. An analysis of the organization structure and objectives.
2. An analysis of manager requirements.
3. An inventory of management talent.
4. A determination of individual needs.
5. An appraisal of individual progress.
6. A means for program evaluation (19, p. 223).

The management of Hawke Brothers Coal Company (in the novel) certainly shows no evidence of any formal management program. And the problem that results is resolved by the

technique Laurence J. Peter calls "percussive sublimation." Scott Hoag, chairman of the board of the coal company and a rather speculative schemer, announces casually at a board meeting that:

. . . his building work was interfering too much with his duties, and so he had to step down. The logical man to take his place, he said, was Glenn. He did not mention the real purpose of this move, which he had worked out with Urban Webber: it was to get his brother-in-law out of the presidency. Scott had decided that Glenn's day-to-day management of the firm had been deteriorating badly because of his excessive dissipation, which was becoming something of a scandal in Hovey. The idea was to put the chief mining engineer of Hawke Brothers in Glenn's place (125, p. 290).

One of the inherent weaknesses of the selection interview to which most personnel specialists refer is the bias and subjective judgment of the interviewer. For instance, Professor Yoder points out:

Hazards are increased because so many managers take for granted their own ability to read the subtleties of character and personality from conversation with a candidate. Many managers are quite sure that they can tell the honest from the dishonest, the creative from the routine, the mature from the immature--all on the basis of a half-hour interview (126, p. 303).

Wouk depicts in his novel the manager who feels certain he can tell the creative from the routine. In a conversation between the editor and publisher of the publishing house considering Youngblood Hawke's first novel, the editor is appalled by his superior's hasty conclusion. Editor Waldo Flipps protests:

. . . so far as I'm concerned the main thing this man has is enormous energy. He has no style, no wit, just coarse humor, he's crude, imitative, in fact he frequently shades off into plagiarism. Possibly he has a good narrative sense, and a serviceable knack of caricature. You're being strangely generous with him.'

Prince leaned back, cradling his head against interlocked fingers, his elbows spread out, one long leg crooked over a knee. 'The thing is, Waldo,' he said, 'I think Youngblood Hawke is money' (125, p. 9).

Wouk makes several scattered references to union activities in the coal mining industry. In one situation he cites evidence of paternalistic efforts on the part of management to stifle union organization. Youngblood Hawke in response to the compliment, "It's a fine hospital. Much better than one would expect, in Hovey," replies, "The coal companies had the sense to put it up. One more way of keeping the union out of the county" (125, p. 331).

The attitude reflected in the preceding comment should reinforce the student's understanding of what causes employees to reject unions. Personnel texts usually cite "cultural factors" (8, p. 85) as particularly significant in causing employees either to accept or reject unions. And the coal mining regions of Hovey are typical of the many rural segments of American society which have notoriously shown anti-union sentiments. This situation would also be representative of what Beach refers to when he notes that employers often initiate, among other tactics, welfare programs during prosperous periods which would ordinarily be favorable for union growth (8, p. 87).

In an earlier section of the novel, author Wouk makes an indirect and interesting commentary on the effect of unionization on management:

Letchworth was one of the last non-union counties in America. The Hovey chamber of commerce said it was because of the rugged American character of Letchworth miners . . . . Union organizers retorted that the real reason was the feudal mentality of the operators, and the fact that the law was in their pockets. The truth was that Letchworth mining was far behind other coal areas in the use of machines. It was a marginal field, and the union wage would have exposed the un-economic nature of mining in the county, and closed the pits. So neither the miners nor the operators especially wanted the union (125, pp. 84-85).

Throughout the novel, the reader is introduced to various tricks of the trade in the publishing business. One scene pictures Jeanne Green lamenting over the tactics used by the publisher of Hawke's newest novel:

She looked at the volume with distaste, remembering all the arguments she had lost: about the withered tea-rose corsage, the motif of the jacket, which had made it a four-color job and which she considered obvious and garish; about the excessively heavy paper, the wide margins, the large type, Givney's whole scheme for passing off a medium length novel worth three dollars as another of Hawke's grandiose tales, worth four. Givney had never once mentioned the higher price as his motive. No, Evelyn Biggers was literature, a work that would become an immediate and enduring classic, a book to own, and therefore the first printing must have the physical dignity of a classic (125, p. 538).

Jeanne's ruminations might well remind the student of his studies of "rationalization," a defense mechanism which usually takes the form of an individual offering false, but socially acceptable, reasons for his conduct. Personnel

texts, in particular, often deal with this topic in discussions of employee adjustment and morale (19, p. 420; 8, p. 453; 32, p. 80).

In the final analysis, much of the practice of management boils down to the management of money; and one of the primary lessons to be learned is for the businessman to be aware of his own limitations. Youngblood Hawke never seemed to learn that lesson, as his ultimate financial standing indicated.

The novel insists upon the futility of get-rich-quick schemes. At one point Hawke is warned:

'Now you ought to think out what you're doing. Do you really want to go on lending money to promoters, on the basis of confidence and hope? People like this fellow Hoag? I want to make it clear that by choosing the right promoters and analyzing their propositions carefully you may become a millionaire in five years, at the rate you're going. But you can also get in hot water. Why do it? Why waste an artist's brain studying real estate deals and stock market charts? You're a productive and successful writer. Why don't you spend enough to live well, save the surplus--just ten thousand a year, say--and invest it cautiously? In thirty years you won't even be sixty--an age I don't consider advanced any more--and you'll have a few hundred thousand dollars bringing you in fifteen or twenty thousand a year. What more do you want?' (125, p. 279).

Hawke fails to heed the warning, however, and he is forced after the failure of several speculative ventures to consider with his lawyer the question of voluntary bankruptcy. Hawke's lawyer commiserates with his young, ambitious client:

'Business--or what our friend calls binness--is a rough game . . . . Most business men who hold the leading places are like Ross Hodge--cold and tough,

and out for their own profit, but honest. That's because fair dealing in the long run tends to pay off. Then there are the crooks, who keep popping up and going to jail. Then there's the twilight area of sharp practice where you find the Hoags and the Givneys. What bothers me is that the twilight zone seems to be broadening lately' (125, pp. 628-629).

#### Summary Comments

In the final analysis, the 783 pages of Youngblood Hawke have relatively few illustrations of management processes to offer the student, and those which are cited underscore problems stemming from the lack of a management development program, the subjectivity inherent the selection process, and tactics involved in labor-management relations.

On the other hand, as noted previously, Youngblood Hawke provides excellent material on the mechanics of American publishing; and the scenes that involve financial maneuvering are both numerous and discerning.

#### The Embezzler

#### About the Author

Louis Stanton Auchincloss fails to see the simultaneous pursuit of two professions unusual. For ten years, the young attorney served as an associate with a New York law firm after which he devoted two and one half years to full-time writing. Finding time heavy on his hands, Auchincloss resumed his law practice in 1954 with Hawkins, Delafield and Wood of New York



as an associate but also continued writing. He was named a partner in the law firm in 1958 (27, pp. 36-37).

Since 1947 this prolific writer has produced fifteen books--novels, collections of short stories, and critical essays. Though he has received no major literary prize, Auchincloss is reported to be "among the best prose writers of his country, incapable of writing a dull or ugly sentence." His biography notes that "Critical response to Auchincloss's novels has been peculiarly consistent. His choice of topic and mode of organization are frequently criticized; his skill as a writer is almost never disputed" (27, p. 37).

#### Summary of Novel Content

I have the distinction of having become a legend in my lifetime, but not a very nice one . . . . I am a symbol of financial iniquity, of betrayal of trust, of the rot in old Wall Street before the cleansing hose of the New Deal. If I had not existed, Franklin Roosevelt (who had a far more devious soul than mine) would have had to create me. The Jews were not more useful to Hitler than was my petty embezzlement to the Squire of the Hudson (4, p. 1).

Such are the words Guy Prime uses to describe himself in the beginning pages of his memoirs which comprise the first half of Louis Auchincloss' The Embezzler. In the last half of the novel, the reader sees Prime both through the mind of Rex Geer, Prime's former friend, colleague, and financial superior; and through the mind of Angelica, Prime's former wife and present wife of Rex Geer.

Using these three points of view, Auchincloss traces the life of Guy Prime, son of an old, but no longer wealthy, New York family. He left banking to become a stockbroker. Caught in the market crash of 1929, Prime lost whatever scruples he might have had and embezzled several hundred thousand dollars from family trust funds and his country club's building fund. When Rex Geer failed to "bail him out" of this catastrophe, Prime found himself first a prison inmate and finally the "village character" in a post-prison exile in Panama.

During his Panamanian sojourn, Prime wrote the memoirs in order that his descendants might hear his plea that was "more sinned against than sinning." The prison term Prime felt perfectly in order; the "general opprobrium" which followed was his cause for concern. The aging man suggested that his grandchildren should use either the moral standard of their day and age or the moral standard of 1936 as a yardstick by which to measure his guilt.

#### Opinions of Literary Critics

The seemingly concerted opinions of the literary critics reviewing The Embezzler can be summarized quite concisely. The novel is not really first class; on the other hand, it is not a bad novel; it is simply not quite "up to par" for Louis Auchincloss (24, 101, 108).

Auchincloss is often linked with Henry James and Edith Wharton, particularly with regard to setting and structure (24, 87, 100, 101). Yet one critic notes that "James had resources, both of insight and of stylistic subtlety, that Auchincloss cannot draw on" (44, p. 36). And though Schmidt concedes that The Embezzler "is not, by any means, a bad book," she concludes by saying, "Auchincloss, whatever his ambitions, is not yet a chronicler of character. At his best, he is an articulate acrobat among a number of points of view" (101, p. 7).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

Students of management are cautioned to remember that an employee will rarely find his job capable of satisfying all his needs. And to understand an employee's behavior on the job, a manager must make himself aware of other influences which have an impact on a man's actions. One text, in discussing the maximization of employee potential, points out:

It must be recognized, however, that all of the employee's needs will rarely be met on the job. Other facets of life are required for satisfaction of man's complex pattern of needs, even for the individual who attains maximum satisfaction from the pursuit of his job. While management's emphasis must necessarily be focused on those aspects of motivation over which it has control, an understanding of the employee's behavior requires that some attention be given to other influences to which employees respond (19, pp. 318-319).

It is through focusing attention on these "other influences to which employees respond" that Auchincloss provides a story

with revelance for a study of management. One reviewer refers to Auchincloss as a novelist who:

. . . directs the reader's attention to what can be seen and known--the world that created the protagonists. He evokes that world--the world of Newport and Bar Harbor, Long Island estates, Fifth Avenue mansions and Washington Square town houses and Wall Street banks in the first decades of the century--with a master's touch (71, p. 98).

Another reviewer reinforces this view by stating:

Mr. Auchincloss is happiest when writing about the elect and the wealthy, and his scenes of the summer days in Bar Harbor, where Guy is trying to make peace with his father, a snob beyond belief, of Guy showing off in the bar of the Glenville, or of Angelica and her mother fighting their way through the cruise of the Aegean are delightful period pieces (1, p. 129).

"Economic conditions" constitute one of the most important "other influences" to which employees respond (19, p. 320), and Auchincloss gives some interesting sketches of the economic conditions of the time. Though Guy Prime's story begins in 1960, his memoirs focus primarily on the decades of the twenties and thirties, with the depression years proving the most notable.

To illustrate, Prime comments on the regulation of Wall Street during the thirties, after describing the control he had over the securities in his wife's trust fund. From his own inheritance, Prime set up a trust fund for his wife and children to shield them from the risk in his stock brokerage business. Acting as co-trustee with Standard Trust, Prime was allowed to keep the securities in his own office for

months at a time. Of this practice, Prime notes, "This may seem very relaxed to present-day readers, but we were in 1936, and my name on Wall Street was still a synonym for reliability" (4, p. 129).

Auchincloss describes past decades vividly, but he also stresses business matters applicable to any time. For instance, he shows Prime lamenting over the great "ifs" of the stock market:

My grandsons will learn from their elders and betters that foolish investors always blame their failure on bad luck. But I wonder if even the wisest watcher of the market could have foreseen the hurricane that wrecked my Caribbean resort island, the patent suit that delayed the production of my Vita-Glass houses, the title flaw that paralyzed my phosphate mines, the federal investigation that slandered my tranquilizer pills. If only one of these projects had been realized in 1936, my troubles would have been over. All were realized ultimately--that is the killing part (4, pp. 29-30).

At another point Prime reflects on the sensitivity of the stock market, "Or was there some bit of bad news in the air, perhaps unjustly attributed to me, of which no one would speak? That is the hell of the market: everything affects it, most of all untruths" (4, p. 31). The student realizes, of course, that Prime's downfall comes as a result of his greed and poor judgment in "knowing when to stop." The student must stop and think, however, about the degree of risk inherent in "playing the market." And the advisability of being well informed when dealing in stock transactions is vividly stamped upon his mind.

### Summary Comments

Detailed illustrations of processes of management The Embezzler does not offer. It does, however, hold out for inspection the financial environment of early twentieth-century New York with its old families, old money, and old schools. And from this presentation, the student should gain a broader perspective concerning the compelling outside forces which influence a business employee's behavior.

### Overdrive

#### About the Author

Like Louis Auchincloss, Michael Gilbert is an attorney who combines the two professions of law and writing. Born in England in 1912, Gilbert is known in his home country as a solicitor, a title which distinguishes him from the barrister "in not having the right of audience (the right to plead in open court), except in a few minor courts" (18, p. 805).

In 1947 Gilbert joined the law firm of Trower, Still and Keeling and the same year published his first novel. Since that time he has become a partner in the law firm and written over a dozen major works of fiction. Best known for his detective stories, Gilbert has also written several plays and edited collections of essays (27, p. 367).

### Summary of Novel Content

Told by a nameless colleague and former war buddy of the protagonist, Overdrive is set in England after the second world war and "is the story of twenty years in the life of a businessman (in pharmaceuticals and cosmetics) with a tremendous overdrive toward success" (13, p. 34).

Oliver Nugent was commander of A Troup during World War II. After the war he joined his friend Dumbo Nicholson as a partner in Quinn and Nicholson, drug manufacturers, and continued in his business relationships the same "energetic, amoral resourcefulness that made him a splendid tactical leader in battle" (14, p. 174).

Oliver was ruthless and shrewd, and engaged in everything from industrial espionage to outright murder to achieve his ends. Early in the novel he is characterized by the statement, "All his life he had been seeing ends without bothering too much about the means" (34, p. 2).

### Opinions of Literary Critics

Few critics have chosen to review Overdrive, but those who have, have made positive comments. The novel is termed "lively" and the author "a gifted writer of thrillers" by one reviewer (14, p. 174). Another attributes to Gilbert "a superb ear for dialogue, and a sense of timing that is pure theater." The novel he calls "enormously exciting and

vigorous" (84, p. 33). "As perceptive and vivid a portrayal of the business world and its ramifications as The Crack in the Teacup (Harper, 1966) was of the political maelstrom," a third reviewer writes (77, p. 4030).

Reviewing for The New York Times Book Review, Anthony Boucher explains:

You may read it as a straight novel utilizing certain techniques of suspense or as a suspense novel of unusual substance. The point is that you should read it. Gilbert is as vigorously readable as ever, he probes a little deeper into some of his characters and he has a story to tell which makes its own commentary on our contemporary world (13, p. 34).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

Overdrive is, in fact, a novel which does not meet the stipulations to be included in the sample for this study. Had the author, an Englishman, written of American business and businessmen, the work would have been appropriate. Gilbert, however, writes of business in his home country and only mentions American business incidentally.

The novel was first published by Harper and Row in the United States. The bibliographies do not list Gilbert as an Englishman. And the bibliographies, further, fail to note the setting of the novel. These points led to the selection of Overdrive as an apt part of the sample for this study.

Gilbert's novel, moreover, offers few illustrations of problems and practices of management. The reader, however, might gain added insight into the unscrupulous characters and



methods which unavoidably creep into business just as they do into any human activity.

For instance, Oliver Nugent is verbally attacked by the wife of his former partner:

'You know,' said Sylvia, her lips trembling, 'you ought to stop sometime and take a look at yourself. At what you've done, and the way you've done it. Then you mightn't be so damned happy about yourself.'

. . . you really ought to carry a notice around your neck. 'Keep off. Danger.' You use people. And when you've used them up, you hurt them or kill them. I heard all about Derek Wibberley. Drunk in charge and assaulting the police. Thirty days. That was a laugh, wasn't it? Well, at least he didn't end up with his head on a railway line like poor Len Williams' (34, p. 188).

At a later point in the novel, Nugent characterizes himself fairly well when asked if he ever had any religious feelings. " 'At the age of ten,' said Oliver, 'I believed firmly in God. I confused him with my father sometimes, but that was all right because I believed in my father, too.' " But when questioned more deeply with, " 'Do you believe in anything now?' " Oliver responded, " 'Of course I do, . . . I believe in success' " (34, p. 237).

Gilbert also offers in his novel some interesting commentaries on various personalities in the world of big business and their underlying attitudes toward their profession. In speaking of Oliver Nugent's prime competitor, Gilbert writes:

Victor Mallinson thought that it was one of the rougher tricks of fate that he should have been given Mr. Crake for a partner, but he was sensible enough to realize that he needed him. They complemented each

other. He thought of himself as an artist, a creator of beauty. He got an aesthetic pleasure out of an exquisitely conceived scent in a beautiful bottle, and he knew that the same bottle represented to Mr. Crake a sum of shillings and pence in raw materials and direct cost, plus overhead, plus advertising, plus retailers' return. It was a necessary discipline. Nevertheless, there were moments when he wondered whether it was worth it: a sordid grubbing after money, and anxiety about profit margins and dividends (34, p. 101).

All in all, the student can find some valuable commentaries on the world of business in Overdrive. He cannot, however, uncover illustrations of the functional processes of management; and as noted previously, the novel deals with business and businessmen in England rather than in the United States.

### Airport

#### About the Author

"An international author in every sense," Arthur Hailey is dubbed by his publisher. Born in England in 1920, granted Canadian citizenship in 1952, Hailey is presently a resident of St. Helena, California.

Though Hailey's efforts are now directed to full-time writing and presiding over a company called Arthur Hailey Ltd., he possesses a limited background in business. In England Hailey worked as both an office boy and clerk. His Canadian experiences include six years as an editor for Maclean Hunter Publishing Company and three years as sales promotion manager

for Trailmobile Canada, Ltd. With the Royal Air Force, Hailey served as a pilot, flight lieutenant (27, p. 409).

Airport is the author's fifth major novel. For In High Places, Hailey received the Doubleday Canadian prize novel award of \$10,000 in 1962. He has written a number of plays for television and has five motion scenarios to his credit.

In publicizing Airport on the book jacket, Doubleday reports:

A hallmark of any Hailey story is painstaking research into the background he is writing about. Before beginning Airport he spent almost a year crisscrossing North America and Europe, interviewing hundreds of airport and airline officials, air traffic controllers, pilots, and others.

#### Summary of Novel Content

Lincoln International Airport, suffering through one of the worst snowstorms in history, provides the setting for Hailey's fast-paced action in Airport. Using the multi-plot technique and interlocking cast of characters characteristic of his earlier novels, Hailey, in a seven-hour time span, explores the problems of airport manager Mel Bakersfeld and a host of other characters.

"In the space of a single night at the mythical Lincoln International Airport, nearly every imaginable man, machine or function goes wrong" (113, p. 84). Among other problems, a disabled Boeing 707 blocks a much-needed runway, a psychotic

boards a Rome-bound flight with a bomb in his briefcase, an air-traffic controller contemplates suicide, and nearby residents stage an anti-noise demonstration at the airport.

Hailey covers his subject with evident technical accuracy, and according to one critic, Hailey does not

. . . overlook the chance to mention in passing--but with sufficient detail, I'm sure, to upset airline executives, managers of non-mythical airports and perhaps the Federal agencies--the dangers inherent in too-short runways, the curtailing of power during the vital early stages of takeoff as a sop to nearby homeowners, the possibility that the easy availability of insurance at every major field may encourage bomb-for-profit schemes, the frantic efficiency which usually prevails in the radar room as traffic is supervised, and even the airlines' pregnancy plan for unwed stewardesses (21, p. 6).

#### Opinions of Literary Critics

Critics have had little but praise for Airport. Most are impressed by Hailey's technical accuracy and make comments similar to, "A vast amount of research has resulted in an authentic behind-the-scenes look at operations, from air traffic control to the cockpit" (112, p. 2132).

The effective use of suspense is often cited (113, p. 84), along with references to characterization such as, "The jealousies, frustrations, failures, and triumphs of the very real people in this novel are vividly portrayed" (67, p. 1020).

Even the reviewer for the New York Times refers to Hailey as "a plodding sort of writer" and concludes that, "he

has just the talent to suggest the crashing ennui of airport routine, where only a mortal disaster can provide color" (79, p. 39).

#### Revelations of Interest in Management

Many of the same problems and practices of management illustrated in the previously considered works can be observed in Hailey's treatment of Airport. The student should have little difficulty in recognizing applied managerial concepts. The problem is merely one of selection.

Planning.--Planning, according to one text "not only involves predetermining a course of action to be taken, relative to a known event, but it includes mentally searching for possibilities of future problems that might appear" (70, p. 61).

Mel Bakersfeld vividly pinpoints the problems that arise when those who control policy on the ground--airport and air traffic--fail to consider this essential element of planning. In discussing with Tanya Livingston the bedlam created at the airport by the raging snow storm, Mel comments, "If you think this is a big horde tonight, wait until the civil version of the C-5A goes into service" (40, p. 26). When Tanya replies that she doesn't "even want to think about it," Mel adds "Nor do a good many other people--who ought to be thinking about it, right now." Those who control policy on the ground, he

says, "are acting as if today's jets will fly forever. They seem to believe that if everybody keeps quiet and still, the new, big airplanes will go away and not bother us. That way we needn't have ground facilities to match them" (40, p. 26). To the rebuttal, "But there's a lot of building at airports. Wherever you go, you see it," (40, p. 27) Mel responds:

Mostly the building going on is patchwork--changes and additions to airports built in the 1950's or early '60's. There's little that's farseeing. There are exceptions--Los Angeles is one; Tampa, Florida, and Dallas-Fort Worth are others; they'll be the first few airports in the world ready for the new mammoth jets and super-sonics (40, p. 27).

Bakersfeld evidences concern over another aspect of planning--particularly the changes which must be brought about in planning due to environmental development and new technology. Managerial specialists note:

Changes in technology are pervasive not only in manufacturing, where the process of replacing old equipment with new equipment that has higher productivity is well known, but also in marketing, transportation, and the services. These changes create opportunities for enterprises that are prepared to meet them. In fact, some firms take leadership in introducing these changes; their managers are known as innovators or entrepreneurs. Other enterprises succeed at least in adapting to technological change, and still others suffer from obsolescence of equipment, methods, and outlook (43, p. 251).

Bakersfeld sees this problem quite clearly when he predicts that "What's coming in the 1970's is going to be worse, far worse. And not just people congestion. We'll be choking on

things, too." When asked the question "Such as what?"

Mel replies:

Airways and traffic control for one, but that's another whole story. The really big thing, which most airport planning hasn't caught on to yet is that we're moving toward the day--fast--when air freight business will be bigger than passenger traffic. The same thing's been true with every form of transportation, starting with the birchbark canoe. To begin with, people are carried, plus a little freight; but before long, there's more freight than people. In airline business we're already closer to that than is generally known. When freight does get to be top dog--as will happen in the next ten years or so--a lot of our present airport ideas will be obsolete. If you want a sign of the way things are moving, watch some of the young men who are going into airline management now. Not long ago, hardly anybody wanted to work in air freight departments; it was backroom stuff; passenger business had the glamour. Not any more! Now the bright boys are heading for air freight. They know that's where the future and the big promotions lie (40, pp. 27-28).

Even before planning for environmental change and new technology, managers must deal with the problem of setting objectives. At this stage the question of social responsibility often arises. Much criticism has been generated in recent years by the lack of social responsibility in businessmen and business organizations. For example, the problem of environmental pollution has become increasingly pressing. One pollutant is noise.

The Meadowood situation in Airport offers an interesting case in point where the student can observe the varying conflicts of interest which must be resolved. The community of Meadowood, which adjoined the limits of the airfield, was established long after the airport had begun operations. This

did not deter the residents from incessant and bitter complaining about the noise from overhead aircraft. Press publicity caused additional furor, and ultimately after long negotiations "involving politics" and what Bakersfield considered "gross misrepresentation," the airport and Federal Aviation Administration agreed to approve jet takeoffs and landings directly over Meadowood only under special circumstances (40, p. 10). This concession generated a conflict because the airport was already suffering from limited runway space. The loss in efficiency would have to be made up in some way which would likely affect others with varying special interests.

A more important conflict arose, however, when the airport and Federal Aviation Agency further agreed that aircraft forced to take off over Meadowood would follow noise abatement procedures. To this concession the pilots protested vehemently. To reinforce this protest, senior pilot Vernon Demerest suggests the following parody instead of the stereotyped message the pilot routinely voices at the beginning of each flight:

'Ladies and gentlemen, at the most critical point of takeoff, when we need our best power and have a hundred other things to do in the cockpit, we are about to throttle back drastically, then make a steep climbing turn at high gross weight and minimum speed. This is an exceedingly foolish maneuver for which a student pilot would be thrown out of flying school. However, we are doing it on orders from our airline employers and the Federal Aviation Administration because a few people down below, who built their houses long after the airport was established are insisting that we tiptoe past.



They don't give a damn about air safety, or that we are risking your lives and ours. So hang on tight, folks! Good luck to us all, and please start praying' (40, pp. 262-263).

A controversy over insurance-policy vending machines and booths in air terminals provides another interesting conflict of interest involving social responsibility.

Vernon Demerest representing the Air Line Pilots Association appears before a meeting of the Airport Commission asking abolishment of the insurance booths and policy vending machines at the airport. He calls airport insurance vending "a ridiculous, archaic hangover from flying's early days . . . insults to commercial aviation" and refers to "docile acquiescence of airlines" and "greedy airport managements." The most significant and vital point he declares, however, is that the system "offers a gilt-edged, open invitation to maniacs and criminals to engage in sabotage and mass murder. Their objectives need be only the simplest: personal reward for themselves or their expected beneficiaries" (40, pp. 165-166).

Mel Bakersfeld has to justify his position on the issue before the board. He is truthful with himself in realizing that the crux of the issue is revenue, as he muses, "At Lincoln International, the airport gained half a million dollars annually from commissions on insurance sales . . . insurance represented the fourth largest concession, with only parking, restaurants, and auto rentals producing larger

sums for the airport's coffers" (40, p. 171). In speaking to the Board, Bakersfeld refers to the loss of revenue, but he also points out that "Actually, the proven incidents of air disasters because of insurance-inspired bombings have been very few" and asks the question, "Might not the disasters still have occurred, even if airport-purchased insurance had not been available?" (40, p. 172).

The independent airlines are faced with even different pressures on the insurance issue:

For one thing, airport managements claimed they needed the insurance companies' revenue; if they didn't get it from that source, they pointed out, maybe the airlines would have to make up the difference in higher landing fees. For another, airlines were not eager to offend passengers, who might resent not being able to buy insurance in a way they had become used to (40, p. 228).

The student of management in looking at these emotion-ridden situations gets no "pat answer" to the problems involved because there are not any "pat answers." He does, however, gain an opportunity to see the many complex issues actually involved, issues not always examined in business courses.

Organizing.--Students of management, in studying the organizing process, often encounter difficulty with authority relationships. They tend to consider managerial authority as absolute, but it is not. Professor Sisk discusses three factors which limit the effectiveness of managerial authority-- (1) superior authority, (2) overlapping authority, and (3) subordinate acceptance of authority. Of the second factor he

notes, "Authority is not cancelled by power conflicts, which arise frequently when authority overlaps; it is only held in abeyance until the forces of power are resolved" (103, p. 294).

Arthur Hailey evidences an awareness of this limitation when as omniscient observer he muses:

An airport, any airport, was an odd complexity of overlapping authority. No single individual had supreme command, yet no one segment was entirely independent. As airport general manager, Mel's was closest to an over-all assignment, but there were areas where he knew better than to intrude. Air Traffic Control was one, airline internal management another. He could, and did, intervene in matters affecting the airport as a whole or the welfare of people using it. He could peremptorily order an airline to remove a door sign which was misleading or failed to conform to terminal standards. But what went on behind the door was, within reason, the airline's exclusive business.

This was why an airport manager needed to be a tactician as well as versatile administrator (40, pp. 12-13).

Staffing.--One important component of the staffing process concerns retirement policies. Many management specialists today criticize rather severely the widespread personnel policy of compulsory retirement at age sixty-five. The primary target of the attack, of course, is the arbitrary age limit. Comments such as the following are typical:

Fixed ages for retirement have long been recognized as representing questionable theory and policy. Many employees, for one reason or another, should or would prefer to retire earlier. Others would prefer to continue working well beyond the usual specified age. In other words, retirement preferences vary. Similarly, chronological age is by no means rigorously correlated with contribution (126, p. 682).

Though most of the concern over compulsory retirement has been with forcing men to retire before they are mentally and physically ready for retirement, Hailey, through the comments of Keith Bakersfeld, elucidates the other side of the question.

Keith at age thirty-eight had been an air traffic controller for fifteen years. He often wondered how many more years he could force himself to go on in a business where "you could be mentally drained, an old man, at age forty-five or fifty, yet honorable retirement was another ten or fifteen years away" (40, p. 134). The fact that "strains on the human systems of those employed in air traffic control had long been recognized," however, had not moved Congress to allow air traffic controllers to retire at age fifty, or after twenty years of service (40, p. 134).

Armed with official flight surgeons' files showing numerous cases of hypertension, heart attacks, gastric ulcers, tachycardia, psychiatric breakdowns, plus a host of lesser ailments directly attributable to controllers' work, the Federal Aviation Agency warned legislators that "public safety was involved; controllers, after more than twenty years of service, were potentially unsafe" (40, p. 134). The warning was ignored by both Congress and a Presidential Commission.

Any situation involving compensation of workers can often become quite thorny, and social responsibility augments the

problems. Through Keith Bakersfeld, Hailey again presents a thought provoking problem of staffing. Faced with psychological and physiological exhaustion at an age when retirement would be impractical, Keith was urged by his wife to quit his job as an air traffic controller. With a wife and family to support, however, the young man felt he simply could not quit his job irresponsibly--"Especially when the job you possessed, the skills you so patiently acquired, had fitted you for nothing else. In some branches of government service, employees could leave and utilize their proficiency elsewhere. Air traffic controllers could not. Their work had no counterpart in private industry; no one else wanted them" (40, p. 138).

The foregoing "trap" was not the only one. Money was another one--the aspect of the problem which touches on social responsibility. "When you were young, enthusiastic, wanting to be a part of aviation," Keith laments, "the civil service pay scale of an air traffic controller seemed adequate or better. Only later did it become clear how inadequate--in relation to the job's awesome responsibility--that pay scale was. The two most skillful specialists involved in air traffic nowadays were pilots and controllers," he continues, "yet pilots earned thirty thousand dollars a year while a senior controller reached his ceiling at ten thousand" (40, p. 138).

Promotion posed another segment of the problem. Unlike most other occupations, air traffic control offered very few senior supervisory posts, and "only a fortunate handful ever attained them" (40, p. 138).

#### Summary Comments

All things considered, Airport is probably the most valuable novel of the ones studied with regard to illustrations pertinent to a study of management problems and practices. The same could be said of Hailey's Hotel. One critic in reviewing Hotel comments, "What Vicki Baum did on a kind of front-office scale in Grand Hotel, Arthur Hailey has done on a scale that undoubtedly covers every department in the curriculum of Cornell's School of Hotel Administration" (60, p. 14). It will be interesting to see if Hailey's new novel Wheels, dealing with the Detroit automobile industry, scheduled for publication in late 1971 has the same relevance for business.

The fact that Airport has the most recent publication date of any of the novels considered lends support to the argument that contemporary authors are dealing in a more and more concrete fashion with the business organization and its problems. Novelists now are less prone than earlier novelists to take the businessman from the business setting and put him into one with which the writer is more familiar.

As the limited sampling of illustrations shows, Hailey deals with many of the routine problems any business organization must face. But, even more significantly, he considers in at least two vivid subplots the very current topic of concern to many practicing managers--social responsibility.

#### Other Novels

Van R. Halsey describes the writer of "critical fiction" as one who "explores the psychological and moral ramifications of experience;" the American novelists of this group he calls "outstanding," "well known," and "spoken of as social critics" (41, p. 402, pp. 391-392).

Saul Bellow and John Steinbeck can be described as writers of "critical fiction." Bellow has often been dubbed by literary critics as the successor to Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner as the foremost living writer of American fiction. Granville Hicks states, "Herzog re-enforces my conviction that Bellow is the leading figure in American fiction today;" and David Boroff suggests that "in Herzog Mr. Bellow unites the two mainstreams of American fiction--Mark Twain (freshness of feeling) and Henry James (intellectual richness)" (76, p. 25).

Besides writing six major works of fiction, Bellow has also authored numerous magazine pieces and several plays. Twice he has received the National Book Award--first in 1954 for The Adventures of Augie March and again ten years later

for Herzog. For Herzog, Bellow also won the \$10,000 Prix Internationale de Littérature (76, pp. 23-25).

With twenty-four works of fiction to his credit before his death in 1968, John Steinbeck includes among his awards the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1940 for The Grapes of Wrath and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962. He has been called by Maxwell Geismar "perhaps closer to the American audience than any other comparable writer;" and Joseph Heller recently stated: "I believe that John Steinbeck and William Faulkner have a better chance of enduring as American authors than all the others, and deserve to" (27, p. 905).

As writers of "critical fiction," moreover, Bellow and Steinbeck fit Halsey's pattern in that they both explore--not the day-to-day realities of the market place--but the psychological and moral problems of the businessman. For this reason, the novels by Bellow and Steinbeck chosen for this study offer no support whatsoever for the major hypothesis, as the following brief comments indicate.

Seize the Day encompasses one day in the life of Tommy Wilhelm, an unemployed salesman, separated from his wife and children, rejected and called a "slob" by his father, and "taken in" by a charlatan psychiatrist who persuades him to invest his last \$700 in the commodities market.

"As in Augie," one critic writes, "Bellow explores obscure emotional patterns, seeking in a variety of ways, many



of them unorthodox, to convey what goes on within the commonplace yet strange people he writes about" (97, p. 3).

John Steinbeck writes of Ethan Allen Hawley, the moral businessman (grocery clerk) in The Winter of Our Discontent. Hawley compromises his principles, however, when he discovers that his business friends and associates display no scruples when it is to their advantage not to and they further brand Hawley a fool for his probity. With The Winter of Our Discontent, Steinbeck has been accused of attempting a comeback; and all of the critics seem to agree that this novel is in no way as well written as his earlier works. One reviewer relates, "It is clearly a comeback effort, and as clearly a failure" (15, p. 24). Another, however, concludes, "'The Winter of Our Discontent' cannot rightly stand in the forefront of Steinbeck's fiction. Yet, it is also a highly readable novel which bristles with disturbing ideas as a spring garden bristles with growing shoots. If this is Steinbeck's second spring, it is a welcome season" (5, p. 3).

Seize the Day and The Winter of Our Discontent, therefore, hold out to the student of management some fine probings into the psychological and moral realms of business experience. They offer no insight, however, into the specific functional processes and problems of management.

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## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Summary

This study has been conducted in an attempt to explore the hypothesis that selected, contemporary American novels offer vivid illustrations of modern problems and practices of management as seen in business and industry.

A review of related literature, both historical novels and critical research materials, provides little direct support for the major question. The rather cursory examination of seven novels published prior to 1949 in addition to the criticism relevant to those works, however, offers enlightening background material for the study. The background investigation also adds strength to the underlying assumptions that the earlier business novel did not treat the businessman in his vocational role and critical researchers have studied neither the early nor contemporary American novel for evidences of modern problems and practices of management.

The main part of the study, which includes a detailed analysis of thirteen contemporary American novels, uncovers some rather interesting results. Of the thirteen novels examined, only four can be cited as having excellent illustrations relevant to students of business management.

Published in 1960, The Lincoln Lords by Cameron Hawley is replete with pertinent illustrations, and particularly helpful with regard to the planning and organizing functions of management. Hawley's novel also contains some interesting situations touching on the social responsibility of the businessman. View From the Fortieth Floor by Theodore White has quite numerous situations concerned with management practices and problems. The directing function is exceptionally well depicted, and the novel gives a detailed view of the magazine publishing industry especially in its relation to social responsibility. A third novel, Airport, by Arthur Hailey, offers excellent illustrations of management practices in action and problems stemming from the use of poor managerial techniques. Airport also touches on the question of the businessman's social responsibility. These three novels will likely remain marginal rather than critical in the literary hierarchy.

Mid-Century is the fourth novel to be considered as excellent for business study. Though Dos Passos' publication of 1961 does not touch on as many aspects of the managerial functions as do the other three novels, this fiction presents an eye-opening account of labor-management relations and evinces more literary polish and skill than those named above.

Published in 1960 by Ira Wallach, The Absence of a Cello like Mid-Century treats an isolated segment of the management process. Wallach's persiflage about the selection process

should, however, be quite informative for the student of management, particularly as the role of the scientist in business has become prominent in recent years and the criticism of the corporation for demanding conformity rarely ceases to flow.

Four more of the original thirteen novels can be classified as ranging from average to fair in the amount of illustration relevant to students of management. The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit, Sloan Wilson's popular publication of 1955, offers a limited number of pertinent situations. Wilson is more important, however, as an interpreter of the environment in which the highly successful businessman and the business organization operate. J. P. Marquand's business preoccupation is similar to that of Wilson. In Point of No Return (1949), Marquand paints a vivid picture of the environment in which business operates. He presents an interesting view of the banking institution, though he touches on very few of the technicalities involved. Where Marquand writes what most critics now refer to as a literarily oriented piece of fiction, Wilson's novel would probably fit more closely into the popular category.

From the Terrace, published in 1958 by John O'Hara, and Youngblood Hawke, published in 1962 by Herman Wouk, are both quite lengthy marginal novels which can be classified as fair with regard to their consideration of technical business

problems. Both are very informative, however, about the business environment. In addition, Youngblood Hawke gives an insider's view of the publishing industry, and provides some perceptive comments in the area of financial maneuvering.

The final four novels have minimal business material. The Embezzler, by Louis Auchincloss, actually develops no situation that clearly illustrates management problems and practices. The novel does, however, refer to financial maneuvering, and vividly portrays the story of the independently wealthy. The second novel considered in this study from the pen of an author-lawyer, Overdrive, by Michael Gilbert, underscores unethical business practices common in England.

Two novels classified as critical fiction round out the summary presentation. Seize the Day by Saul Bellow (1956) and The Winter of Our Discontent (1961) by John Steinbeck both fit well the novel of literary intent as they deal almost none at all with the technicalities of the business organization. Both novels explore the psychological and moral problems that confront a man in modern society geared to big business or little business.

Of the thirteen novels analyzed in detail for vivid illustrations of modern problems and practices of management, therefore, four are termed excellent with regard to relevant illustrations; one novel is good; two may be classified as

average and two, fair; and finally, four novels fall in the poor category.

### Conclusions

The primary conclusion to be drawn from this study is quite apparent. Though four of the novels considered for a detailed examination prove excellent in terms of source material, the majority of the novels have too few illustrations reflective of modern problems and practices of management to support the major hypothesis: A student should read selected, contemporary American novels with the primary objective of experiencing vicariously problems and practices of management.

The student can benefit technically by reading fiction drawn from a selected group of contemporary American novels concerned with business affairs, however. Though he may experience vicariously only few problems and practices of management, he can derive other benefits which would make his reading of business novels valuable to him as the following comments indicate.

### Implications

As noted in the introduction to this research effort, skilled writers of the novel, with the primary intent of entertaining, often deal quite subtly and perceptively with everything from the mammoth corporation to the single

proprietorship. And they work--not with the sterile setting which the student meets in his textbooks--but with stories cast in a dynamic environment fraught with the many contingencies of business life on which the management texts fail to touch or which they handle with a cautious reserve. Without exception, every novel of the thirteen considered in the major analysis for this study, has some significant contribution which can enrich a student's understanding of business and its management processes.

For instance, the student contemplating a vocation in business can ponder with Charles Gray in Point of No Return the superficial moral and business standards and thinly veiled competitive feelings which often seem to dominate the thoughts and actions of young executives intent on climbing the ladder of corporate success. He can engage in some thoughtful soul searching or introspection with Tom Rath in The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit who weighs the alternative of sacrificing his entire personal life in order to become a top corporate executive.

While reading From the Terrace, the student of management can reflect upon the attitudes and practices of the socially elite which indicate status in the business organization. And he can assess his own sense of values and review his own philosophy concerning the need for a business community which

has a social conscience when he reads The Lincoln Lords, The View from the Fortieth Floor, and Airport.

Several of the novels, including the ones by John Marquand and Sloan Wilson, portray the business organization demanding almost absolute conformity from its employees. But particularly in reading The Absence of a Cello, the student will find an opportunity to test his responses to such demands.

Even the novels like Seize the Day and The Winter of Our Discontent, with their emphasis on man's psychological motivations, have much to offer the students contemplating a career in management. Rarely will an employee find all his needs met on the job; and though management must necessarily concentrate on those aspects of motivation that are job-related, the most effective manager in an attempt to understand his employee's behavior will be the one who turns some of his attention to influences outside the job environment. All of the novels considered shed light on these outside influences which affect an individual's performance on the job.

All in all, the student stands to gain much by reading from a selected group of contemporary American novels concerned with business affairs. In some instances he can experience vicariously modern problems and practices of management. But more importantly, his interest in business



management is stimulated as he observes the business organization in its total environment with all the interdependencies which are continually present.

#### Areas for Further Research

This research has exposed as many questions as it has resolved. Two of these questions concerning fruitful areas for further research are worthy of mention.

Throughout this study the idea has been advanced that the writers of contemporary novels dealing with the business organization are more likely to leave their characters in the business environment than were the novelists of an earlier time period. And researchers studying the role of the businessman in fiction often call attention to the vindictive way in which early novelists treated the businessman in their works.

Sloan Wilson considers these points when he writes:

One of the great tragedies is that novels generally have to be written by novelists, a thin-skinned breed which the personnel men of great corporations recognize on sight, and escort quickly to the door. The result is that few novelists know anything about business, and most of them are vindictive toward it (4, p. 29).

The question comes to mind, however, if writers of contemporary business novels leave their characters in the business environment more often than did their predecessors and also treat the businessman in a less vindictive manner, might it be because contemporary novelists writing about

business have considerably more first-hand experience in the business world than did earlier novelists? This question, therefore, could provide an interesting topic for further research. The idea might also be advanced that the novelist treats the business organization in a less vindictive manner because the contemporary business organization has improved and the vindictive treatment is less appropriate.

A two-pronged question worthy of additional investigation is suggested by Van R. Halsey in his discussion of the difference between marginal and critical fiction. Halsey's concern is over views and myths--plus the sources of these--which businessmen and professors associate with one another. Professor Halsey points out that not only do literary artists writing critical fiction often display an antagonistic attitude toward business values but the same holds true for literary critics and historians as well. Critics and historians also have the responsibility for assisting the general public to select novels most deserving of serious attention. These factors have led, therefore, to a perpetuation of myths about the businessman.

For instance, Halsey calls attention to the Literary History of the United States which reports Frank Norris' The Pit as an "impartial study of the meaning of American Capitalism" and Sinclair Lewis' Babbitt and Main Street as "the best social history of the white collar class of the United

States . . . because of their almost naive honesty and their accurate focus upon typical experience." At this point,

Halsey questions:

One wonders whether Babbitt's realization that perhaps all life as he knew it was futile was a typical American experience, or whether it is what many people would like to think of as a typical businessman's experience (1, p. 401).

The ultimate question is suggested in Halsey's added supposition that "the myths the professor has about the businessman are largely formed from the fiction he reads. And in all likelihood this is the same fiction selected by the literary historians and critics because of its literary merit" (1, p. 401). One might ask, therefore, "How does the professor view the businessman, and what myths does he have about the businessman? How does the businessman view the professor, and what myths does he have about the professor? Might any of the views or myths be attributable to the fiction read by either group?"

#### Trends

Though the findings of this research effort have not led to complete support for the major hypothesis, it might be well to add that the trend seems to be for contemporary novelists--particularly writers of popular fiction--to deal with the technicalities of the business environment more so than did their predecessors. For example, the five novels deemed by this study most illustrative of management problems and

and practices have publication dates during the decade of the sixties. The novels which have fewer illustrations pertinent to the study were primarily published during the forties or fifties and/or written by novelists widely acclaimed as writers of critical fiction.

This study might be duplicated at a later date and with more recent novels, therefore, to test further the original hypothesis and, finally, to check the preceding supposition concerning the trend toward a more fully realized business setting.

To conclude, this research suggests that succeeding novelists will concentrate more and more on the businessman's reaction to the critics' plea for businessmen and business organizations to display a sense of social and moral responsibility. This trend is suggested for three reasons. First, three of the novels analyzed in this study, The Lincoln Lords, The View from the Fortieth Floor, and Airport, develop quite well the theme of social responsibility. And all three of these novels were published during the decade of the sixties. Second, the topic appears to be one in which writers of both critical and popular fiction are interested. For instance, all the novels analyzed in Chapter Two dealt more with social and cultural ills of the day than with technical problems of business organization. Third and most significant, the businessman is addressing himself to this problem frequently today.

Thomas A. Petit says that the primary function of the corporation is still economic. It must concentrate, therefore, on the production and distribution of goods and services. But because of the great power it wields, the corporation is a political organization. Moreover, the corporation is a welfare institution "because of its influence on individual and social welfare . . . a social institution because the cooperative efforts of many people with different interests are necessary to carry on its operations, and . . . a cultural entity since its activities occur within a framework of commonly shared beliefs about how people should behave" (2, p. 21).

Professor Petit goes on to explain that we are not indicating "a radical new relationship between the businessman and society" when we talk about "socially responsible managers." We are merely calling attention to a particular emphasis, characteristic of our industrial state of development, in the role of the manager. Petit sees it as a mistake to view as antisocial the self-seeking activity of the entrepreneur of the nineteenth century. The entrepreneur who aggressively pursued profit for its own sake was "precisely what society required at the time for the capital accumulation that was needed to attain a high rate of economic growth." And the entrepreneur's essentially selfish behavior was allowed because that behavior was "well suited to

the industrialization of the economy that was the required means to achieving a higher standard of living for all the members of society" (2, p. 73).

Many people might well accuse Petit of rationalizing the actions of the nineteenth-century manager. The argument fades into insignificance, however, when one notes the professor's conclusions regarding the present-day manager:

Now that the most arduous part of the task of building an industrial economy has been completed, a new type of behavior is coming to be expected of business leaders. The vast power that society has placed in their hands must now be used to achieve a different set of objectives than those envisaged by the captains of industry. Since these objectives are more explicitly social in character than profit making appears to be, it is not surprising that many observers conclude that the socially responsible manager is now trying to serve social ends, whereas his nineteenth-century predecessors did not (2, p. 73).

Current data supports Petit's statement that the "socially responsible manager is now trying to serve social ends." The Chase Manhattan Bank, for instance, requires extra services from its young executives in counseling with minority-owned businesses and community groups on financial matters. Atlantic Richfield, in effect, discriminates against the white job applicant by instructing its managers to hire nonwhite job applicants ahead of equally qualified whites. Standard Oil of Indiana is building a \$100 million, eighty-story office building in Chicago. It is requiring that the work force of the contractors be thirty-four percent black,

a requirement rare in the construction trades. General Electric plant managers are submitting five-year plans for increasing minority employment (3, p. 1).

In taking steps such as the ones cited above, corporations rarely cite altruism as the true motive. "Enlightened self-interest" is the reason most executives offer for their steps toward social responsibility. "They see changing public opinion, growing pressure from activist groups and the threat of ever-tightening regulation of hiring, pollution and product safety as good reasons to take the initiative themselves" (3, p. 1). Despite the reasons, however, the fact that these corporations are showing a concern over social responsibility is a step in the right direction; and novelists will likely record the concern in up-coming fiction.

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