

## **The Quiet Americans: The influence of the Academy of Management leadership on business education in America, 1936-1960**

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"A dollar love had good intentions, a clear conscience, and to hell with everybody."

Graham Greene 'The Quiet American', 1962, p. 62

### **ABSTRACT**

The Academy of Management (AoM) was founded in 1936 by a small group of "university teachers of management" (Jamison, 1936) led by Professors Charles L. Jamison of the University of Michigan and William N. Mitchell of the University of Chicago. In less than seventy years the AoM has grown from 10 to almost 15,000 members to become one of the leading associations for scholarship in the fields of management and organization. From its early beginnings as a US academy by 2004 it has members in 91 countries of the world. Today, it has "21 professional divisions and three interest groups" (AoM On-Line, 2004) that reflect a range of scholarly communities and interests, from the more traditional functional area of operations management through to the more radical concerns with Critical Management Studies. Nonetheless, the association continues to be dominated by a largely white, male, and functionalist (Burrell & Morgan, 1979) membership.

In 1971 when the first nine "professional divisions" were formed eight represented functional or areas of management (e.g., Human Resources, Production/Operations Management) or academic disciplines (e.g., Organizational Behaviour), and one -- 'Social Issues in Management' -- represented a broader area of concern. Women and people of colour were few on the ground at the annual conferences until the 1970s and it was not until 1979 that the association elected its first female President -- Rosemary Pledger. The Women in Management (WIM) Division did not come into being until 1983 and only one woman served as AoM President in the 1980s -- Kathryn M. Bartol in 1985. Female leaders were more in evidence in the 1990s -- with Jan Beyer in 1991, Mary Ann Von Glinow in 1995 and Ann Huff in 1999. Three of the five AoM presidents since 2000 have been women -- Jean Bartunek (2002), Jone L. Pearce (2003), Rosalie Tung (2004). Tung is the first person of colour and the first non-American to lead the organization: Tung was born in Hong Kong and has Canadian citizenship. It was not until 1998 that issues of race and ethnicity

appeared as the central focus of any division but even here it was left to the Women in Management Division to change its domain statement and name to incorporate gender and diversity in organizations. It was only in 2002 that Critical Management Studies appeared as an interest group at the AoM.

In this paper we set out not to document the functionalist dominance of the AoM but rather to look at the roots of that dominance. In particular the paper sets out to understand how the early leaders, debates and philosophies of management shaped the AoM and its impact on management thinking over time.

Drawing on archival material and content analysis of management texts (published prior to the mid-1960s) that were authored by former presidents of the AOM, we explore a number of emerging themes and issues in the early years that shaped the modern AoM and had some influence, through the management text (Mills & Helms Hatfield, 1998), on wider constituencies of management educators. We conclude that the early leaders of the AoM played an important role in establishing an organizational culture that encouraged objectivism (cf. Jamison, 1937b), elitism (cf. Jamison, 1937a), ethnocentrism (cf. Newman, 1948), masculinist values and a philosophy of management that was rooted in a commitment to “free enterprise” and anti-communism (cf. Mee, 1953). Nonetheless, we contend with Jamison (1954) that it would be “some time in the dim future [before] the Academy [would] become a potent force”. The AoM had much less of a direct impact on management thinking than the textbook production of the early AoM leaders – all of whom were pioneers in the development of the management textbooks (cf. Davis, 1957; Davis, 1940; Jucius & Terry, 1961; Koontz, 1941; Mee, 1952; Newman, 1947).

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