I Rethinking the Map of Management History

To think differently about management, we need to shake up the map of management history.

This book takes aim at an unnoticed barrier to innovation: the conventional history of management. We take as our particular target the form in which this history is most often experienced by management initiates: management textbooks. The purpose of these textbook histories, in the words of those who develop them, is to ‘put the present in perspective’ and ‘to help us understand today’s management theory and practice’. But this approach, we argue, justifies present practices as part of an evolutionary advance and makes it less likely that substantive change will occur. A New History of Management seeks to counter the assumptions that this conventional view promotes in order to question the present, blur the boundaries defined by simplistic versions of the past and to encourage thinking differently for the future. This first chapter surveys the current narrow and homogeneous map of management history and outlines a methodology for a deeper historical understanding that can encourage people to think differently about management.
As a starting point in our new exploration of the history of management, we sought a snapshot of what historians have previously seen as worthy of investigation.¹ We surveyed the most highly regarded journals of management and business history to ascertain the geographical locations that they focussed on. We coded the 859 articles from the journal Business History published over the past six decades; 894 from the journal Business History Review for the same period; and the 234 and 78 respectively published in the more recently established Journal of Management History and Management and Organization History. About 80 per cent of the articles could be coded for their geographic focus, or which part of the world the article was about. We sent the results to Worldmapper.org to create a map that depicted the world in terms of the relativities in the data. The picture on the page opposite is the world according to management and business history journals [Figure 1].² In this world, the two Anglo giants, the UK and the US, dominate. Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa just about hold their own, while the rest of Africa, Asia and South America shrink to slivers.

This is obviously problematic from the perspective of wanting to encourage diversity. But where this is less obviously problematic is that this picture may be reflective of a potential decline in innovation in management and it is this that is the focus of this book. Our thesis may be summed up in a sentence: if we are to think differently, truly innovatively, about management, we may have to look again at and rethink our historical assumptions about our field.

This idea differs from those reasons put forward by scholars recently as to why we may have seen a decline of substantially new

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² The authors wish to thank Benjamin D. Hennig and Danny Dorling at the University of Sheffield and www.worldmapper.org for kindly developing this map based on our data.
ideas in management studies. They have suggested a range of other limits. For example, a low-risk inductive-deductive approach to copying ‘best practice’ rather than aiming abductively for next practice (Martin, 2009; Nattermann, 2000; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004); theorizing in ways that are disconnected from the realities of management practice (Clark and Wright, 2009; Cornelissen and Floyd, 2009; Sandberg and Tsoukas, 2011; Smith and Lewis, 2011); a desire to borrow theories from other fields rather than develop unique theories (Oswick, Fleming and Hanlon, 2011; Whetten, Felin and King, 2009); professional norms that privilege research appealing to traditional conventions and highly ranked forums (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011; 2012; Bartunek, Rynes and Ireland, 2006; Grey, 2010; Shepherd and Sutcliffe, 2011); and the limiting institutional conditions of theory development in business schools (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2012; Clark and Wright, 2009; Grey, 2010). Our book provides another reason: that the current lack of innovation has roots in the past, or more specifically, in management research’s narrow view of what in its past is relevant. The limited way in which we have recorded our past limits what we focus on and how we theorize in the present and consequently bounds progression. New possibilities and
interconnections can result from a deeper, broader and more engaged connection with history.

While history has occasionally been noted in debates about the lack of innovation in management, the view that looking forward is the source of new ideas is still promoted: ‘we still look to the “founding fathers” for our fundamental questions and our methods for answering them. We carry the historical baggage of their underlying assumptions. And, like lost colonial outposts, we retain a sentimental attachment to the tools, constructs and limitations of our core disciplines’ (Suddaby, Hardy and Huy, 2011, p.237). The implication is that if management is able to escape from its history, thinking will be freed to be more in keeping with new times and to be more innovative. We argue the opposite: rather than running away from history and paying it less attention, we should dive back in, take a broader look and uncover more than the narrow view recorded in conventional histories of management. More history rather than less could promote greater innovation.

A New History of Management subsequently advocates an approach that may seem contrary to logic: that looking back in this way can foster a greater plurality of ideas that can be debated, challenge one another and be combined to promote innovative thinking. We argue that the limited, one-dimensional, uni-cultural way in which we have recorded our field’s past can limit what we focus on in the present and how we face the future.

The elements of this argument are not new. There is increasing awareness about the links between greater diversity leading to more innovation, idea generation and more creative problem solving. One of the first scholarly books on creativity, Arthur Koestler’s (1970) The Act of Creation, links creativity to the Latin verb ‘cogito’ (to think), which, he explains, ‘means to “shake together”… the creative act, by connecting previously unrelated dimensions of experience is an act of liberation [and] defeat[er] of habit’ (Koestler, 1970, p.96). As Koestler’s work has been revisited in recent times, interest in this idea has grown. Scholarly research has promoted diversity of
perspective as a means of countering the effects of ‘dominant logic’ and spurring creativity and innovation (e.g., Bettis and Prahalad, 1995; Jackson et al., 2003; Kearney and Gebert, 2009; Polanyi, 1981; Prahalad and Bettis, 1986; Shin and Zhou, 2007; Williams and O’Reilly, 1998). Others have linked a reducing range of citations, and a focus on recent articles and a faster forgetting of works from earlier ages (what is sometimes referred to now as ‘attention decay’), to a narrowing of scholarship and a reduction in significant new knowledge development (Evans, 2008; Parolo et al., 2015). And a range of popular books have appeared trumpeting everything from the ‘Medici Effect’, or the Medici’s ability to bring together leaders in a range of disciplines (Johansson, 2006); how a diversity of ‘visions’ contributed to the creation of the American Constitution (Ellis, 2012); Einstein’s breadth of life experiences (White and Gribbin, 2005); and the range of personalities that Edison assembled (in addition to his own peculiarities) at Menlo Park (Baldwin, 1996).

Indeed, a good example of how innovation emerges from diverse characteristics combining or ‘bisociating’ (to use the Koestler’s term for this idea) can be seen in Edison’s notebooks. Edison’s ideas books were divided in two. Edison would scrawl out his barely legible flashes of inspiration. And then, on the facing page, an associate, such as precise and highly organized Charles Batchelor, would work out these ideas more fully and start to plan out if and how they might be realized (Figure 2). Neither Batchelor nor Edison’s approach, on its own, was innovative: innovation emerged when the two were ‘shaken together’.

Furthermore, our argument that looking back can help us to better look forward is not completely new with respect to management history either. Some recent works have linked a neglect of historical awareness to a number of key skills business students are less likely to acquire. They argue that a better understanding of management’s history helps students learn the lessons of past mistakes (Smith 2007; Thomson 2001; Wren 1987a); or establish a link with ‘great minds’ (Bedeian, 2004); or develop a ‘collective memory’, an
identity for the profession or an integrating framework (Khurana, 2007; Smith, 2007; Wren, 1987a); or that it provides a baseline for evaluating the extent of change in management over time (Jones and Khanna, 2006; Smith, 2007; Thomson, 2001; Wren, 2005; Wren, 1987a); or that a better understanding of history assists students to think about how supposedly ‘new’ management practices really are (Bedeian, 2004; Smith, 2007; Thomson, 2001; Wren, 2005).

We agree with these assessments. However, it is not just the lack of history teaching that goes on in business schools and who is teaching it that diminishes our field (Wren, 2005). It is also the quality of teaching materials and, in particular, the lack of a critical and creative attitude that prevents history having the positive effect on management’s future that it could. Addressing this by promoting
a search for greater diversity would, we argue, offer a further advantage of a historical engagement, which would result not only in better students in the present, but fundamental improvements for the future of our field. *A New History of Management* argues that encouraging people to think critically about the construction of management history will enable them to think more creatively about what management could be.

And the first and best place that we might start thinking critically about the presentation of management history is introductory management textbooks.

**THE TARGET: THE TEXTBOOK VIEW OF MANAGEMENT HISTORY**

Students want to know what works and what doesn’t … they are not interested in the details of research, the historical evolution of our knowledge, or long discourses on competing ideas.

Stephen Robbins (1997, p.xvii)

Given most management students and scholars only encounter the history of the general field (as opposed to their specialization) in introductory courses and texts, and that textbooks in general play an essential role in codifying and disseminating the foundations and limits of what is important in a field (Kuhn, 1970; Stambaugh and Trank, 2010), management textbooks may provide the best insight into the conventional view of management’s origins (Jones and Khanna, 2006; Payne, Youngcourt and Watrous, 2006; Smith, 2007; Wren, 2005). Subsequently, our new history of management starts with exploring how history is presented in these texts.

Typically, studies of textbooks have focussed on the accuracy of the representation of pioneers such as Taylor (Payne, Youngcourt and Watrous, 2006) and critical events such as the Hawthorne Studies (Adair, 1984; McQuarrie, 2005; Olsen, Verley, Salas and Santos, 2004). We, however, are not so much concerned to report on inaccuracies, but to highlight what is promoted, both in terms of the content...
and the process by which this content is seen to develop, and by association left out, so that we might think further about alternative origins.

The views expressed by Stephen Robbins at the head of this section reflect a general undertone in many management textbooks (Robbins goes on to claim that ‘students’ interest in history is minimal’ and that ‘the classical material in management textbooks has little value to today’s students …’ 1997, p.xvii). This view resonates with broader assumptions about the ideal managers for the ‘new economy’: free floating identities, trained to constantly embrace change, unattached and unencumbered by history [assumptions recently critiqued by Sennett (2006) and Petriglieri and Petriglieri (2009; 2010)]. Moreover, this view may be connected to debates in management education, suggesting that our curricula would be more relevant [i.e., better] if it was cut free from teaching subjects for tradition’s sake and reflected what was actually happening in the world of business practice (Bennis and O’Toole, 2005; Mintzberg, 2004; Rubin and Dierdorff, 2009; Worrell, 2009).

But despite this antipathy, a simple ‘potted history’ is found in most introductory texts: almost always in ‘chapter two’ after an introductory chapter [Chapter One will define the field; Chapter Two reinforces this by outlining the history of these definitions]. These histories typically identify the key kernel as the assertion of a mechanistic-industrial worldview [if cultures prior to the industrial revolution are incorporated, it is because modern management’s staples, planning, directing, organizing and controlling, are discerned in their achievements, not because they looked at things differently – Tsoukas and Cummings, 1997]; and a subsequent belief that since that point, progress has come from the development of a more humanistic and organic understanding. This continuity currently culminates in views about the discovery of contingency, systems approaches and culture, and importance of sustainability and an organization’s responsibility to the wider environment, views claimed to oppose management’s classical approaches. Figure 3 is
a representation of a map from a recent textbook that illustrates the standard narrative.

While most texts do not outline a historical map as explicitly, one may be discerned in the origin stories told and the subsequent sequencing of chapters in other texts, from the simplest/oldest mechanistic theories to more recent international, diversity-encouraging, ecologically minded chapters towards the end. The content of their descriptions of their field’s history and the process by which it is outlined is strikingly similar, as shown in Table 1.

Where are the key points of origin in the historical narrative outlined in management textbooks taken from? As Table 1 illustrates, sometimes no references are needed: this is common knowledge. But when references are cited, they are similar. They tend to be the few management history books that were written at the time most of these textbook’s first editions were developed (the late 1960s and 1970s). The books written by C.S. George (1968/1972), Daniel Wren (1972), Sidney Pollard (1965) and Alfred Chandler (1962) are utilized to a great extent. Sometimes academic articles are also cited, either from business history journals or in other journals, but with a historical theme. Wren’s books, in particular, cited academic journal research as a basis of his book which formed the basis of many of the histories in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textbook</th>
<th>Precedents leading to management</th>
<th>Primary individuals</th>
<th>References to management histories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bateman &amp; Snell (2009)</td>
<td>Poor production efficiency,</td>
<td>Adam Smith → Taylor →</td>
<td>Chandler (1990); George (1972)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>management decisions unsystematic</td>
<td>Fayol → Mayo → Weber →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinicki &amp; Williams (2009)</td>
<td>Industrial expansion, labour</td>
<td>Taylor → Gilbreths → Weber →</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>in short supply, need to improve labour productivity</td>
<td>Mayo → McGregor →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rue &amp; Byars (2009)</td>
<td>Rapid industrialization but</td>
<td>Taylor → Barth → Cooke →</td>
<td>Wren (1972, 1979); Chandler (1959); Mee (1963); Wrege &amp; Hodgetts, (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>production methods crude,</td>
<td>Gantt → Gilbreths → Fayol →</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>needed to be improved</td>
<td>McGregor → Mayo →</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peters &amp; Waterman</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Robbins et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Popularity of division of labour, industrial revolution, need to maximize efficiency</td>
<td>Adam Smith → Taylor →</td>
<td>George (1972); Banta (1993); Kanigel (1997); Wagner-Tsukamoto (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gilbreths → Weber → Fayol →</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Follet → Mayo → Maslow →</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>McGregor</td>
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Table 1 (cont.)

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<th>Textbook</th>
<th>Precedents leading to management</th>
<th>Primary individuals</th>
<th>References to management histories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schermerhorn et al. (2014)</td>
<td>Workers produced less than they were capable of because of inefficient work methods</td>
<td>Adam Smith → Taylor → Gilbreths → Fayol → Follet → Weber → Mayo → Maslow → McGregor</td>
<td>Wren (2005); Kanigel (1997); Locke (1982); Wrege &amp; Perroni (1974)</td>
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</table>
the textbooks. There was a convergence of interests here. The period post–World War II witnessed the spread of business schools at universities, and the first serious histories of management were written which outlined the fields’ noble origins and helped legitimate them being seen as ‘university worthy’. The Ford and Carnegie sponsored reports had prescribed the ideal form of a business school and its curricula (Gordon and Howell, 1959; Pierson, 1959). And with a further growth spurt in student numbers and advances in pedagogy and publishing, the first textbooks (as we know them) started to emerge en masse. Business Schools, management textbooks and a history of management grew quickly in this period and legitimated one another’s existence.

It may be that these limited historical reference points lead to the homogeneity displayed in the world map at the head of this chapter (and we shall pay close attention to the influence of George and Wren in later chapters). However, before jumping to this conclusion, we did wonder after looking at the Worldmapper image if we were unreasonably harsh on the reporting of management history. Would it not be the case that historians writing in English and contributing to leading scholarly journals (given that highly rated journals tend to be based in places like the US and the UK) would be similarly predisposed to focus on ‘their own’? Might it not be self-evident that management and business histories should focus on the regions where the industrial revolution or management consulting began? The Worldmapper result made us curious to investigate the presentation of business and management’s history, relative to the presentation of history in comparable fields.

Consequently, as a next step, we set out to probe whether management history writing was any more limited than other types of history and whether there had been any changes of scope over a substantial period of time. We already knew that business had two highly regarded history journals that been published for over six decades: one based in the US, one in the UK (Business History and Business History Review). Having decided it would be useful to use these journals as representative
of the field and leave aside the other two management history journals which were established far more recently, we required, as comparable sets, disciplines with more than one highly rated history journal devoted solely to the study of just its history [i.e., journals with a broader focus on the history of a group of subjects like science or art were not useful for our purposes] and for one of these journals to be based in the US and another in the UK or another country.

Economics, law, philosophy and many others fell short of our comparable academic history journal criterion for selecting comparators. However, the history of medicine and the history of architecture did meet our needs. Like management and business, these are stochastic fields where, while we may be guided by theories or principles, we must adjust our thinking and recalibrate our actions as our subjects or cases or stakeholders respond in individual ways to previous interventions in changing environments. Our initial investigations also revealed that there seemed to be no recent laments in these fields about the lack of new ideas. Consequently, we sought to analyse and contrast what their histories recorded with management and business history.

We constructed three sets of abstracts dating from 1951 to 2010. The business history set contained all 859 abstracts from articles published across this period in the UK-based Business History, and the 894 abstracts published in Business History Review. (The Journal of Management History and the Journal of Management and Organizational History, data from which we shall refer to on occasion later in this chapter, are based in the US and the UK, respectively). The medical history set was made up of 602 from the UK-based Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences and 1554 from the US-based Bulletin of the History of Medicine. The third set, of architectural history abstracts, comprised 1059 abstracts from the US-based Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians and 292 from the UK-based Construction History. While neither the medical nor architectural set contained the abstracts of all the articles published in this period [as we were reliant on downloading electronic versions of the abstracts, there were a couple of years that were not
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Coded for time – Raw</th>
<th>Coded for time – %</th>
<th>Coded for place – Raw</th>
<th>Coded for place – %</th>
<th>Coded for both – Raw</th>
<th>Coded for both – %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BH</td>
<td>724/859</td>
<td>84.28</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>80.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHR</td>
<td>710/894</td>
<td>79.42</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>84.34</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>79.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Coded Business</td>
<td>1434</td>
<td>81.80</td>
<td>1529</td>
<td>87.22</td>
<td>1404</td>
<td>80.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JHMAS</td>
<td>580/602</td>
<td>96.34</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>79.73</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>76.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHM</td>
<td>728/1554</td>
<td>46.85</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>49.09</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>32.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Coded Medicine</td>
<td>1308</td>
<td>60.67</td>
<td>1243</td>
<td>57.65</td>
<td>963</td>
<td>44.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSAH</td>
<td>443/1059</td>
<td>41.83</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>84.42</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>37.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>288/292</td>
<td>98.63</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>88.70</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>88.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Coded Architecture</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>54.10</td>
<td>1153</td>
<td>85.34</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>48.77</td>
</tr>
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obtainable in both the medical and architectural history journals, often in the years surrounding a change of publisher), in both instances, we were able to gather the majority of all abstracts with representative samples across all six decades of our survey.

After discussing and ruling out potential criteria (such as whether the perspective being applied was conventional or unconventional) for being too difficult to determine reliably in our large data sets, we settled on two simple aspects: the geographical location focussed upon in the article, or ‘place’, and the temporal setting or age focussed upon, or ‘time’. Experienced researchers could quickly code for these aspects with extremely high inter-rater reliability, and given that our purpose was not to capture the truth of what happened in the past, but to seek comparison that would help to raise questions about how what we focus on in the past illuminates pathways in the present, time and place were effective dimensions with which to begin.

As we explain in the paragraphs to follow, our results for geographic place, time, and time and place together show that management and business history has a far more limited geographical and temporal perspective than either of its two comparator fields of inquiry. More encouragingly though, we found signs that greater diversity in management history is certainly possible and that it may now be emerging. Table 2 shows the numbers and percentages of the articles surveyed from the six business management, medical, and architectural history journals published between 1950 and 2010 that could be coded for time of focus, for place focus, and for both time and place.

Table 3 shows the numbers and percentages of the articles surveyed from the two additional management history journals that are referred to in this chapter that could be coded for time of focus, for place focus, and for both time and place.

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3 When an article focussed on two or more discrete geographical locations, we gave each of these locations a fraction of one [e.g., a focus on the US and Japan scored .5 for each location]. When an article focussed on a very broad swathe of time, we recorded the median point.
Table 3  *Data for Two Additional Management History Journals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coded for time</th>
<th>Coded for time – %</th>
<th>Coded for place</th>
<th>Coded for place – %</th>
<th>Coded for both</th>
<th>Coded for both – %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JMH</td>
<td>134/234 57.02</td>
<td>149/234 63.40</td>
<td>113/234 48.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JM&amp;OH</td>
<td>56/78 71.79</td>
<td>50/78 64.10</td>
<td>45/78 57.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4** Percentages of Geographical Focus in Architectural, Medical and Business History Articles

**Conventional Management History’s Relative Limits**

*Place*

Our initial analysis on the places focussed upon indicated a far greater deal of geographical variety in journals of architecture and medical history (Figure 4). While the US and UK, respective home bases for the two journals chosen to represent each of these
professions, were also the two most written about national settings, nearly half of the articles on architectural history were written about other locations, as were over a third of the medical history papers. Just over a quarter of all business history papers focussed on territories beyond the US and UK.

Moreover, there is a significant difference in the total number of countries focussed upon in that ‘other’ category. A total of eighty-four countries have been afforded at least some consideration by architectural historians: eighty in medicine, and only fifty in business. No other countries (apart from the US and the UK) have over 5 per cent representation in business history journals. In medicine and architecture, two other countries achieve this level of significance (Germany and France, and Italy and France, respectively). While we might hope that the more recently published management history journals would demonstrate greater diversity and variability of place, the results here are fairly consistent with their business history cousins, as Figure 5 illustrates.

![Figure 5: Total Percentages of Articles Coded for Place in the History of Management Journal and the Journal of Management and Organizational History](image-url)
When we grouped the data into six decades, from the 1950s to the 2000s, for Africa, Asia, Continental Europe (i.e., Europe minus the UK), North America and the UK, we observed some interesting changes in the representation of place over time between the three sets. There are some encouraging signs, with respect to diversity, in management and business history journals. The percentage of articles relating to Asian and African locations that could be coded for place has increased steadily from around 2 per cent in the 1950s to 5 per cent in the 2000s for Asia and from 0.75 per cent to nearly 2 per cent for Africa. Correspondingly, interest in the UK has waned.

But what is starker when one compares the data is how the medicine and architecture sets show much more variability in focus over time than business. For example, architecture history papers go from next to nothing on Asia and Africa in the 1950s to 16 per cent and 4.5 per cent on these regions respectively in the 1980s, a peak which drops away again after this flourish. Medical histories interest in these two locations peaks in the 1990s (at 10 per cent) and 1960s (4.3 per cent) respectively. This would appear to indicate that medical and architecture history is more able than business history to shift historical focus so as to move with the problems or interests of the times. This relative lack of variability in business history research is something we will also see with respect to temporality in the next section.

**Time**

In addition to coding articles for place, we also sought to gain some appreciation of the times or ages focussed upon across our three sets of history journals and arranged these into 20-year blocks. As with place, not all articles were focussed in this way, but the vast majority (about 70 per cent overall) were, and could be coded. Whenever a broader period of time was focussed upon, we recorded the midpoint or median year.

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4 We recognize that grouping our data into continents in this regard is problematic. For example, the stories from Morocco will likely be very different from those of South Africa or Uganda. But our aim here is to illustrate in a powerful way a lack of diversity in management and business history, not to replace global homogeneity with a belief that there should be continental homogeneity.
The bar (or ‘Manhattan’ skyline) charts show the frequency of dates focussed on within the journal articles for each of the three discipline sets published during the period 1950–2010 as a percentage of the total. Each has different characteristics. Architecture (Figure 6) is the most broad-ranging, with a very specific homage paid to the period 1900–20, but significant populations of articles dating back through many centuries.

Medical history (shown in Figure 7) lacks a stand-out skyscraper, but has a wide spread of significant focus of over 6 per cent representation right across the period 1800–1940 and at least 1 per cent representation all the way back to 1600.

Business history (Figure 8) is far more concentrated towards the right-hand side of the graph, with 1920–40 matching the height of architecture’s tallest bar, but with a range of similarly tall edifices on either side. The periods from 1900 to 1980, in business history, each have greater representation than any single period in medical history. If we were hoping that the management history journals were broader in their emphasis, again, as with time, the patterns here are
more or less the same, but with a greater intensification of bias towards sites dated 1920–60 (Figure 9).

Moreover, when we look at the average time of focus for each of our three subject sets, what falls within one standard deviation of these averages, and how these numbers change through the decades, we can interpret some interesting differences between business and architecture and medical history in terms of diversity of focus (see Figure 10).

The mean date for the 1434 Business History articles for which dates could be determined was 1879. For architecture history (n = 731) it was 1763; for medical history (n = 1308), 1791. When we removed the dates that were ascribed to articles that focussed on a broad sweep of history (e.g., ‘the eighteenth century’), the averages understandably moved forward in time: business (n = 480), 1908; architecture (n = 326), 1806; medicine (n = 417), 1843.\(^5\) Architecture and

\(^5\) An interesting sidebar is just how much greater the percentage of business history journal articles relate to specific times and places (c. 80 per cent), relative to a much lower percentage in architecture and medicine (40–50 per cent) where the concerns are more often general or time/place neutral.
Medicine show more variability of movement of the average time of focus over the decades, with a distinct shift of focus in architecture in the 1970s and medicine in the 2000s, perhaps with an emphasis shaped more by the particular concerns of the times rather than reinforcing traditional origins/sites of truth. Business has followed a steady path at a consistent distance from the past (about 100 years – or about 70 years if we adjust so as to not include those articles with rather vague dates, e.g., the seventeenth century). However, the levelling off in recent times around a mean date of 1910 would be worrying if it suggested a sedimentation and growing stagnation.

More interesting, however, may be the standard deviation results which illustrate the normal breadth of focus. Here, the standard deviations around the mean measures were two and a half times larger for medicine and architecture than for business. For business history, it was 115 years; architecture 247; medicine 261. When we removed the dates that were ascribed to articles that focussed on a broad sweep (e.g., nineteenth-century Trade Associations), the standard deviations differences were even starker: business, 47 years;
architecture, 209 years; medicine 157 years. The circle in Figure 10 (around the smallest standard deviation relating to business history writing in the 1980s) falls on the same period that most of today’s major textbooks in management were consolidating into their current formats. While these texts were generally informed by books (e.g., Chandler, 1977; George, 1972; Wren 1972), these books and the textbook writers themselves were influenced by the narrow view of the field in general in creating the narrow histories that they pass on to students. These books are often now into their twelfth, thirteenth or fourteenth editions, but while nuances may shift across editions to move with the times, the key characters and events regarded as management’s points of origin, and the way these are presented, have not changed.

Time and Place

Having looked at the data with respect to time and place, we then combined these dimensions, taking those articles that could be coded for both (since 1800, to enable more readily comparable graphs) and plotting the percentages for each of the three sets in bubble area graphs.

As Figure 11 indicates, Business is highly concentrated around North America between 1840 and 1860 and the UK and North America in the first 60 years of the twentieth century, although it does have representative ‘dots’ of interest on almost all areas of the grid.

Architecture (shown in Figure 12) has a wider range of significant interest, geographically and temporally, with more continental European focus and significant pockets of interest outside of the north western world (e.g., Africa 1820–40; South America 1840–60; Asia 1820–40).

Medicine (Figure 13) has a much broader time span of concentrated interest and a greater focus on Continental Europe than management and business history, but it demonstrates a smaller degree of interest beyond those three geographies across time than architecture. However, like business, it does cover more of the ‘bases’ (even if only to miniscule degrees in many cases).
We acknowledge that the study reported on above is limited. For reasons that we have explained, we have focussed on simple dimensions that could be easily coded reliably across large samples: place
and time. It might be argued that diversity could be analysed by looking at disciplinary perspectives of the location that authors are based in, and we would encourage further studies that looked at these aspects. While we have not directly linked greater historical diversity to greater innovation in management thought, we believe that the arguments linking homogeneity of perspective may lead to a lack of innovation in the present, and should cause us to ponder how history may play a role in limiting perspectives of what is relevant and possible in our field. In defence of these limitations, we have investigated history not to prove current interpretations wrong, to develop causal theories of what leads to innovation or promote new truths, but to raise doubts about current norms so as to encourage greater diversity and thinking otherwise.

Early in this chapter, we outlined the premise that greater diversity of perspective can encourage greater innovation, and we linked it to current discussions about why management is not currently generating significant new theories and perspectives. We suggest that a limited view of the past may constrain perspectives of what we take management to be about in the present and subsequently could be limiting future development. We then sought to investigate the
So, how does management and business history compare when looked at in this light? First, the bad news: it has a far more limited geographical and temporal perspective than either of its two comparator fields of inquiry. Based on what we have outlined above, we could surmise that when the history of management and business was first taken seriously, as part of a process to legitimate the then-fledgling field in the mid-twentieth century, it embraced origins that helped legitimate and make sense of the present constitution (Cummings, 2002; Gordon and Howell, 1959; Khurana, 2007; Pierson, 1959). These origins were found in the US and Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since that point, management and business history’s temporal focus (unlike architecture or medicine) does not appear to have changed focus to reflect particular problems or new concerns. And, it seems now that it may be anchored on a median spot – 1900–20, as conventional histories are prone to do, unless they are challenged. There is a danger that management history may now be acting as a limit: an archive stuck in time, rather than a dynamic reflection of a vibrant field with multiple possibilities.

In reflecting on this, it is worth considering that there has not been widespread lament in the leading medical and architecture journals asking where their fields’ new ideas are. It may be that their wider, more diverse and dynamic histories, and related broader view of what their boundaries could embrace, help to spur creative hybrids and other forms of innovation. However, in defence, readers may already be thinking that architectural historians, for example, would have it easier than business historians in being able to study a wider range of physical remains and plans. This is certainly true, but just as difficulty is the excuse history never accepts (Murrow, 1961), difficulty should not be an excuse for historians or management scholars. If the intent exists to study difficult or non-obvious objects or look in novel ways and adopt other perspectives, then such histories will emerge.
And this brings us to the positive news. Figure 11 also shows that business history may come from any age and location, if we choose to focus there. Specs of interest are widespread and even more so in business than architecture. Furthermore, while the management history ‘Manhattan’ shown in Figure 9 is similar in most respects to its business history counterpart, it does demonstrate pockets of interest prior to 1680. In addition, while the percentages are small, there are increases in articles focussing on Asia, South America and Africa.

The good news in this regard is that management’s history is not atemporal. Because our view of management’s past (like most history) may be shaped less by what happened as that history was forming than by present concerns as that history was written, it need not be considered immobile – as the chapters that follow will demonstrate (Cummings and Bridgman, 2011). Hence, we can reinterpret and reshape it.

While management and business history’s collective memory, or perspective of the past, does appear limited when compared to other fields, what we found also points to the possible role that this history can play in broadening thinking in the future. Rather than merely teaching or implying that what is worthy of attention in management and business history happened in the UK and the US between 1800–1920, we should actively seek out, and encourage young scholars to seek out, alternative perspectives from other times and places that could be rejuvenated, or combined with thinking from other times and places to create interesting hybrids, or broaden our understanding of what the field could be about or help us to look differently at old and new management issues. New knowledge about history, we hope, will be incorporated into textbook histories that can provide new vehicles for future thinking.

There appear to be two main approaches to help promote this development: going wider than the small set of standard characters outlined in those ‘chapter two’ textbook histories and looking into worlds that are not influenced by modern Western industrial perspectives; and going deeper and getting more engaged with archives to gain
a better understanding of the complexities of the lives and times of those claimed to be management’s founders.

**Going Broader: Looking at Other Worlds of Management**

Diversity has been a ‘hot topic’ in management over the past decade. For example, Kirkman and Law’s highly cited review in *Academy of Management Journal* hailed a ‘real internationalization of AMJ’ (2005, p.385). Such diversity, and the creativity that this would bring, has led them and others to proclaim the start of the twenty-first century as a ‘golden age of international management research’ (Kirkman and Law, 2005, p.379, see also Ellis and Zhan, 2011). Tempering this optimism, however, has been the observation that while international diversity has grown, mirroring the internationalization of membership of the Academy of Management, there is a homogenizing use of a Western research paradigm, ‘whereby researchers inadvertently depress the development of novel ideas and theories that may prove to be useful in advancing knowledge in different national and emerging-economy contexts’ (Tsui, 2007, p.1354). In other words, while knowledge development may appear more diverse, this surface diversity may in fact mask more subtle homogenizing tendencies (e.g., Bruton et al., 2005; Metz and Harzing, 2009; Meyer, 2006; Terjesen et al., 2016).

A similar process appears to be happening with regard to management history. Our own research into papers presented at the recently held first Academy of Management conference in Africa (with an aim to ‘bring Africa’s unique capabilities and needs to the attention of the world’s organization and management scholars . . .’, Academy of Management, 2013), found that while a large proportion of the presentations focussed on African subject matter, they applied research techniques and theories developed in the West or did comparison studies between modern African thinking and practice and what had been found on similar dimensions in modern Western sites. Not one of the 99 presentations took as its primary focus indigenous African organizational forms or management practices and only one explicitly questioned the appropriateness of conventional theoretical
foundations applied in an African setting and sought to advance an innovative perspective out of this (Mangaliso and Lewis, 2013).

While the Academy of Management in Africa initiative was certainly a step in the right direction with regard to increasing diversity, we, like Tsui and others (e.g., Decker, 2013; Li, 2012; Sundararajan, 2015; Welch et al., 2011), would encourage management scholars and educators to take different contexts seriously, to develop innovative theory and to ask novel questions inspired by a deeper contextualization, not just with regard to present empirical research, but in researching management history too.

In line with our earlier arguments with regard to creativity, it would be valuable, therefore, to combine this initiative with a real effort to find interesting and underappreciated alternative approaches to management from continents other than those enlarged on the map at the head of this chapter. For example, an exemplary study in this regard is Avner Greif’s work on the coalitions formed by eleventh-century Maghribi traders from North Africa to enable them to work efficiently across borders without the legal institutions that would regulate what we today would consider a conventional market. As Greif (1993, p.526) explains:

Expectations, implicit contractual relations, and a specific information-transmission mechanism constituted the constraints that affected an individual trader’s choice of action. In particular, these constraints supported the operation of a reputation mechanism that enabled the Maghribis to overcome the commitment problem [and] reinforced the expectations on which the coalition was based, motivated traders to adhere to the implicit contracts, and led to entry and exit barriers which ensured the sustainability of the coalition.

At the time that Greif wrote this, it was customary, following the thinking of Ronald Coase, to distinguish between market and non-market institutions (like those which governed the Maghribi’s practices). New forms of markets enabled by recent developments in
information technology, forms that are difficult to regulate with conventional legal systems, were not known. Revisiting premodern non-market cases like that of the Maghribi provides a useful way to think innovatively about how the current rise of what we call secondary—or after—markets [Bayón, 2013], such as those operated by derivative traders, eBay, Craigslist, Amazon and AliBaba, might self-regulate, evolve and be enhanced or detracted from through the imposition of conventional market constraints [see Baumol, 1990, for a similarly insightful cross-cultural study of diverse types of entrepreneurship from different ages].

Further examples of how a change in historical perspective could change future practice and scholarship could be the application of medieval, scholastic and monastic traditions to think differently about business ethics or modern knowledge-intensive firms [McGrath 2005; 2007; Wren, 2000]. It had been the case that the history books used in New Zealand schools continued to promote the views of those who had first reported on the wars between the British colonial forces and the indigenous Maori, right up until the 1980s (see, e.g., Oliver, 1981, p.58ff.). The view was that the Maori had ‘shewn no strategical knowledge’ [Carey 1863, p.66] and that they had displayed the ‘weaknesses generally associated with savage races [fighting] under no definite strategical plan and without unity of command’ [Shrimpton and Mulgan, 1930]. It was not until this history was questioned by others that it was discovered that the Maori had actually achieved many victories against difficult odds as a result of their ‘unusual’ practices that Maori approaches (loosely planned but mostly emergent) were acknowledged as worthy of further consideration [Cummings, 2002]. A new generation of curious historians were then able to see that ‘It is true that Maori organization was informal and unstructured. But the absence of European forms of organization does

6 An inspirational project that goes wider than conventional norms in this regard is the emerging open-source African Economic History project being developed by Ewout Frankema from Wageningen University and Ellen Hillbom from the University of Lund (see www.aehnetwork.org/textbook/).
not mean that organization per se was absent’ (Belich, 1986, p.130). The pride and creative dynamic that these historical re-appreciations helped promote are still being felt today. Moreover, this insight would have offered an interesting alternative view on the debates that beset strategic management in the 1990s, as to whether strategy was more truly about planning from the top or bottom-up emergence (Ansoff, 1991; Mintzberg, 1991), and which is still of interest to those who view strategy as practice or focus on the importance of micro-foundations today (Vaara and Whittington, 2012). If other civilizations had seen strategy as both planning and emergence, both big-picture and micro-foundations, could not modern strategy thinkers view it this way too?

While we certainly advocate ‘going broader’ in the sense we describe above, the particular focus of the remainder of this book will be ‘going deeper’, as we explain below.

Going Deeper: Re-engaging with the Conventional Foundations

Digitization has enabled great advances in management research. It stands to reason that more recent works are more likely to be digitized, and that those who learn to research in a digital age may be predisposed to look at what is available in this form at their desks rather than travelling further afield into original archives. However, other writers in different fields have already published work theorizing that a reducing year range of citations may lead to a narrowing of scholarship and reduction in substantive innovation (Evans, 2008).

Looking beyond the ubiquity of the internet may take researchers and educators to interesting places, and offer new insights (Decker, 2013; Schwarzkopf, 2012). For example, tracking down hard copies of data created by long-established industry associations, data that does not exist online or in electronic form, has enabled some authors to think differently about the reasons why manufacturing clusters emerge and continue to evolve even after the economic reasons have declined (Sorenson and Audia, 2000).
Similarly, looking at actual copies of *Moody’s Investment Magazine* from 1911 (unavailable electronically) or the archive of the Stevens Institute in New Jersey provides us a very different view of the birth of management from modern management textbooks. F. W. Taylor’s work, paramount in the minds of management historians and other scholars as the point of origin (George, 1972; Wren, 1972; Wren and Hay, 1977), is something of an afterthought in these *Moody’s* pages. *Moody’s*, typical of newspapers of the time, focussed far more on the legal and political setting for the ‘birth’ of management as we know it. Indeed, while we did not code for subject perspective in our sample of history articles, anecdotally we can say that most management and business historians look from a conventional modernist management perspective.7 Hence, they focus on professions like engineering and economics and see management science emerging due to organizations seeking to become more efficient or needing to quickly increase production to meet demand. However, legal and political histories see developments much closer to the picture painted in the pages of *Moody’s*, regarding the rise of management as coat-tailing upon Roosevelt and Pinchot’s short-lived ‘conservation movement’ and gaining popularity only through Louis Brandeis repackaging of the ideas of F. W. Taylor and others into something that he branded ‘Scientific Management’ in order to win a high-profile legal case in 1910–11. Digging into the correspondence between Taylor, Brandeis and other key players behind the scenes is very insightful in this regard, and seeing conservation or sustainability as the origin of management might lead to interesting recalibrations around what it is that good management seeks to achieve. This approach forms a basis for the work presented in the third chapter of this book.

7 It proved impossible to code for perspective quickly and reliably in any meaningful way. While we recognize that we do not, therefore, cover the likes of Tsui’s (2007) concerns, our aim, as stated earlier, was to do what we could to raise doubts about current conventions in management and business history so as to add to the debates about the dearth of new ideas as this relates to management education.
Fruitful rethinking can also occur by considering what might be lost in translation. Recent work has begun to highlight how original work can be mistranslated or only partially translated when recast in English by Anglo writers. For example, what management students are shown to be Max Weber’s contribution to their field is a snippet seized upon by modern thinkers who saw bureaucracy as a wholly negative term and subsequently painted Weber as an outmoded bureaucracy booster. This interpretation is partly enabled by the way that Talcott Parsons and others chose to translate some elements of Weber’s work and not others and emphasize certain interpretations above alternatives (Clegg, 2005; Mills et al., 2014), or to translate words in ways that created different meanings. This approach for looking deeper informs our discussion in Chapter Four.

There are promising signs with regard to rethinking, deepening and broadening our views of management history and its contribution to thinking differently for the future (see, e.g., Cooke and Alcadipani, 2015; Hassard, 2012; Khurana, 2007; Rowlinson, Hassard and Decker, 2014; Usdiken and Kipping, 2014; Wadhwani and Bucheli, 2014). But to add to this emerging research agenda, we should think seriously about how we may inspire greater horizons for the next generation of management scholars, by looking for alternative historical precedents and perspectives that they can reflect upon when considering the limits of the field that they are entering into and whose future horizons they will determine. In the paragraphs below, we outline a methodology for doing this.

A METHODOLOGY FOR A NEW, DEEPER HISTORY OF MANAGEMENT

There are three elements in my approach. They are [1] the refusal to accept as self-evident the things that are proposed to us; [2] the need to analyze and to know … thus, the principle of curiosity; and [3] the principle of innovation: to seek out in our reflection those things that have never been thought or imagined.

Michel Foucault (1988, p.1–2)
In parallel with an emerging historic, or historical, turn in organization and management studies (Clark and Rowlinson, 2004), there has also been a cultural or critical turn in management history (Rowlinson and Delahaye, 2010; Rowlinson and Hassard, 2013). Business historians have become increasingly interested in the business aspects of cultural industries. The work of Charles Harvey and Jon Press on William Morris (Harvey and Press, 1991) should be noted for reaching a much wider audience than is usual for business historians through their contribution to a major exhibition on Morris at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Harvey and Press, 1996). Business historians have also recognized the value of cultural sources such as novels for understanding business practices, especially in relation to gender (Maltby and Rutterford, 2006; Rutterford and Maltby, 2006). However the cultural turn in business history goes beyond an interest in cultural industries of using cultural sources and involves the use of concepts from cultural studies to examine the history of the corporation itself as a cultural phenomenon (Lipartito and Sicilia, 2004). Most provocatively, Mayhew (2009) has argued that the work of economists and business historians on the historical role of corporations can be analysed as ‘stories’ and ‘narratives’ in the same way that novels, journalism and popular writing on corporate power can be analysed. Unfortunately, business historians have overlooked Mayhew’s work.

The rise of Critical Management Studies (CMS), building on work done in the area of labour process theory in the 1970s, has also encouraged increasing openness towards rethinking history in organization studies (Braverman, 1974; Marglin, 1976 [1974]; Rowlinson and Proctor, 1997). Drawing on Foucault for the most part, the Marxian account for the rise of the factory and modern management was increasingly questioned in a series of foundational texts for critical management studies (Burrell, 1998; Clegg, 1990; Jacques, 1996). And the increasingly critical approach to memory in organization studies has also given rise to what could be called the deconstruction of corporate, or rhetorical, history (Stambaugh and Trank, 2010). Durepos and Mills (2012a; 2012b) in particular have developed
a distinctive approach to understanding how historical narratives are developed from archives that draw on Actor Network Theory, hence their term ANTi-History, which has increasingly been taken up as an approach for conducting historical research in organization studies (e.g. Bruce and Nyland, 2011).

Although each of these texts can be criticized for their cavalier treatment of historiography (Rowlinson and Carter, 2002), they have removed the strait jacket of labour process theory where the underlying rationale for all historical change in work organization is in effect known in advance. Subsequently, critical management scholars have highlighted various lacunae in the historiography of management, such as the neglect of slavery (Cooke, 2003) – which we shall investigate in more detail in Chapter Two of this book.

Our approach follows these cultural and critical leads, but it is more inspired by a Foucauldian than a Marxist perspective. Foucault (1980, p.70) wrote histories that sought to counter conventional histories which aimed at uncovering the truth of events presented as a ‘progress of consciousness’ that led to (or caused) a higher-level present. Foucault (1977b, p.143ff.) regarded traditional histories as legitimating the establishment and closing down of alternatives: what is to be recorded as the ‘origin [becomes] the site of truth’ and in a circular manner ‘makes possible a field of knowledge whose function is to recover it’, and such origins, rather than having an objective status, tend to be picked out and promoted because they relate to present concerns. ‘In placing present needs at the origin’, Foucault continues, ‘the metaphysician would convince us of an obscure purpose that seeks its realization at the moment it arises’, and, over time, this ‘truth’ then becomes ‘the sort of error that cannot be refuted because it [has been] hardened into an unalterable form in the long baking process of history’.

Foucault consequently defined his type of history in this way: ‘Instead of legitimating what is already known [I aim to rethink historical assumptions in order to] free thought from what it silently thinks, and so enable it to think differently’ (Foucault, 1985, p.9).
Consequently, Foucault did not aim for or claim to uncover the real truth, just to do enough to raise doubts about what was promoted as the truth of the evolution of objects and subjects (e.g., Foucault, 1977a; 1978). And this is precisely the critical, cultural and creative approach to history that inspires us in its targeting of conventional assumptions about management history.

Foucault saw conventional histories as legitimating the establishment, and so he sought to write a different kind of history. He was more interested in examining the ‘history of the emergence of [the establishment’s] truth games’ (Florence, 1984, p.314). Consequently, Foucault did not seek to explain whole periods against a criterion of linear progress, but to ‘define the conditions in which human beings “problematize” what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live’ (1985, p.10). He tended to start with present concerns or particular problems (e.g., ‘madness’), asked questions like ‘why do we treat madness as we do?’ and then questioned the normal responses (e.g. ‘because our methods are the best suited to counter [or normalize] madness’). In this book, we adopt a similar counter-historical approach. We begin with the question ‘why do management textbooks treat history as they do?’ and question the normal responses: ‘because it is a good representation of what actually happened’ or ‘because it is the most effective way to educate our students’.

Foucault spent decades developing different ways towards this aim, and his work is generally divided into a number of different phases and approaches (Burrell, 1988; Cummings and Bridgman, 2011). His early works simply sought to highlight historical inaccuracies and, through engaging in hard work of going back into the archives and re-reading often forgotten historical documents, discover the truth of how history really unfolded.

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8 Florence was later revealed to be Foucault writing about himself under a pseudonym.
9 Although it should be noted that additional approaches are still being discerned as researchers and translators compile new editions of his last lectures (see Raffnøe et al., 2016).
In his next, or ‘Archaeological’, phase, Foucault let go of the idea that there were historical truths to be uncovered and adopted a more structuralist approach that argued that what we considered truths were the result of prevailing paradigms or what he termed *episteme* and that these were supported and reinforced by historical understandings. His counter-histories in this period sought to reveal how these episteme worked to produce and order what we considered to be valuable knowledge.

Recognizing that archaeology offered no possibility on promoting change (all was enveloped by the structure of an *episteme*), Foucault then developed an approach called ‘Genealogy’. Here, he moved away from the structuralist tendencies of archaeology and focussed instead on how micro-political webs of connection and power developed and supported the formation of truths. The development of a history that supported the current configuration was a key element of such networks, but this and all other elements that made up these formations could move and hence there was some fluidity to knowledge systems. Foucault’s genealogical works were less structuralist, but they left the question: if we are all subject to power/knowledge networks, what can we do?

Richard Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow from the University of California, Berkeley helped Foucault in his later years combine archaeology and genealogy into an approach they termed ‘Interpretive Analytics’ (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983). In simple terms, this was a combination of archaeology’s recognition of the role of episteme in forming knowledge, and genealogies’ interest in the power networks that cut across these and both reinforces the current formation, but could also promote change as they moved. Combining the two encouraged Foucault to look at other episteme (e.g., the Ancient Greeks) as a way of showing discontinuities and how things had been different, and so could be different again if we can engage in strategies such as thinking differently about conventional histories.

Despite these different approaches, a number of counter-historical threads weave throughout Foucault’s oeuvre. These can be
brought together, in the interests of utility (Foucault did, after all, want his ideas to be used – Eribon, 1991; Miller, 1993), to outline more generally how a Foucauldian approach to developing a counter-history that enables us to think differently about the history of management studies, could proceed.

1. Foucault moved from linear time as a model for history to space. In this way, he sought to challenge historians who discerned gradual global evolutions in higher forms of knowledge with the notion that changes could be sudden and abrupt, only to be smoothed out later in hindsight. Hence, Foucault often began his counter-histories by juxtaposing different artefacts to depict these different ‘frames’. In *The Order of Things* (1970, p.xv), a Chinese encyclopaedia’s categories set against Western sensibilities illustrate ‘the exotic charm of another system of thought [which is at once] the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking that’. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977a) highlighted the rupture in Western views on keeping order by counter-posing a grandiose description of the public execution of the regicide Damiens with a mundane prison timetable from 30 years later. In the same works, he drew upon spatial metaphors like Bentham’s model prison, the Panopticon, to depict the sudden change in the ‘architecture’ through which people saw the world (Foucault, 1977a). These unconventional artefacts, be they grand or low-brow, obvious or obscured and needing to be dug out of dusty archives, could open a window through which one might begin to probe an age’s forgotten predispositions (Foucault, 1980, p.194).

2. Foucault (1985, p.10) did not seek to explain periods in line with a criterion of chronological progress towards higher levels of truth, but to understand why change occurs through ‘defin[ing] the conditions in which human beings “problematize” what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live’ at certain points in time. He started with particular concerns or problems and asked, for example: ‘why did modernity make such a problem of madness?’; and then questioned normal responses: ‘because this was necessary to develop and apply the
most effective methods of curing it’. Similarly, the counter-history that follows will wonder why management becomes a major problem in the early twentieth century, question the conventional view that this was part of a gradual evolution of thinking in response to changed social and economic conditions and look again at the problems influencing the framing of thinking at this moment in time.

3. Foucault argued that these frames and problems determined and shape the objects seen. Against histories that traced the development of objects and the separate subjects that examine them, Foucault saw object and subject as co-determining one another. He would argue, for example, that ‘Man’ did not exist until the practices constituted by the rise of humanism and the human sciences took hold (Foucault, 1970); and that ‘madness’, as we conceive it, could not be conceived without the conditions that enabled psychology. For Foucault, this historical nominalism meant that it was the emergence of humanism in combination with the transition into modernity (an age beyond the custom of the power of the sovereign or his agents to ‘do violence’ in order to maintain social control) that made a problem of how control was to be upheld. This problem created the need for human sciences, which sprang forth to outline human norms and laws that should be adhered to, but these did not exist objectively or independent of the system that promoted them.

4. Rather than plotting the past in terms of its step-by-step evolution to the present, Foucault focussed on how objects and subjects are constituted by a ‘diagram’ or web of relations that spreads out from a particular problem to sustain understanding. Noujain (1987) demonstrates this dispersive, diagrammatic outlook by illustrating Foucault’s key elements and relationships in the formation of psychoanalysis. The subject emerges as part of modernity’s quest for bands of normality, which is sustained by latching onto already accepted scientific institutions (the modern hospital and the science of psychology). The history of psychoanalysis spoke of these links, but remained silent on how it built upon other non-scientific elements:
the confessional, a particular inheritance of Christianity, and the presence of the organizational form of asylums formerly used for interning leprosy victims.

5. Whereas conventional historians depict how some things cease (e.g., archaic methods of knowing Man) while others are constant (e.g., the object Man), Foucault’s counter-histories would overturn accepted continuities and discontinuities. He demonstrated, for example, that Man as an object was a discontinuous and recent conception, while the new human sciences, which would ‘know Man more truly’, actually continued with many archaic traditions. While the ‘historical tradition aims at dissolving the singular event into an ideal continuity’, Foucault’s histories (1977b, p.154) sought to ‘transpose the relationship ordinarily established between the eruption of an event and necessary continuity’, in order to ‘disturb what was previously considered immobile’.

6. Finally, Foucault did not aim to uncover the real or the objective or the whole ‘truth’. The aim of the counter-historian is to raise doubts about, and alternatives to, conventional truths about the evolution of an object in order to open things up and encourage thinking differently. Thus, while ‘historians take unusual pains to erase the elements in their work which reveal their grounding in a particular time and place’, Foucault’s (1977b, p.90) history would be ‘explicit in ... acknowledging its system of injustice. Its perception is [knowingly] slanted’.

The methods Foucault (1985, p.9ff.) employed towards his overarching aim, to free thought from what historical assumptions lead us to ‘silently think and enable thinking differently’, exhibited characteristics that we will draw upon. His approach was not to be comprehensive, but knowingly ‘slanted’ towards raising doubts about conventional histories and their basis upon assumed ‘origins’ (Foucault, 1977b, p.90, 144) (figure 14). He saw development stemming not from progression over a series of periods, but arising from the ‘conditions in which human beings problematize’ their
1. Move **from linear time as a model for history to space**: juxtapose abrupt differences in different spaces rather than a smooth progression of ideas.
2. Do not explain periods in line with a criterion of chronological progress, but understand why change occurs in line with the **conditions in which human beings ‘problematize’ existence**.
3. Against histories that trace the development of objects and the separate subjects that examine them, examine how **object and subject co-determine one another**.
4. Focus on how **objects/subjects are constituted by a ‘diagram’ or web of relations**.
5. **Overturn accepted continuities and discontinuities** in conventional historical narratives.
6. Do not aim to uncover the real or the objective or the whole ‘truth’, just raise doubts about, and alternatives to, conventional truths about historical evolution.

**Figure 1.4 Six Counter-Historical Strategies Borrowed from Michel Foucault**

existence, problematizations that became focal points for intellectual ferment (Foucault, 1985, p.10). He recognized that subjects and objects are not independent, but arise in response to these points of ferment and are sustained by relations that harden over time (e.g., Foucault, 1977b, p.144). And, to illustrate this, he would zero in on a particular point, work out from that surface to trace historical inter-relations and ‘disturb’ what conventional histories record as progressive continuities by bringing forgotten discontinuities to light (Foucault, 1977b, p.154).

The counter-history presented in the following chapters seeks to employ these strategies to raise doubts about our assumptions of how management studies came into being, what it responded to, what ‘good’ it seeks to serve, what it is fundamentally about and what it could be.\(^{10}\) It overturns accepted continuities and discontinuities in its evolution, highlighting the unusual webs of relations that created and promoted its formation. It traces how the subject of management emerged in combination with the object it sought to observe, more suddenly than what we might have thought, and in response to the major problems of the ages in which it emerged.

\(^{10}\) As a variation, Chapter Four’s assessment of the treatment of Max Weber applies a kind of interpretative analytics, but in all other chapters use these six general elements as our method of attack.
Foucault’s ideas have been applied to critiques of specific limitations in management thinking with regard to bureaucracy (Cummings and Bridgman, 2011), crisis management (Vanderbroeck, 2012) and project management (Söderlund and Lenfle, 2013). But nobody has investigated where these foundational limits have emerged from, the extent of this homogeneity relative to other similar fields or reflected upon how this may impact on innovation and creativity in the field. This is what we do in the remainder of this book.

WHAT A NEW HISTORY OF MANAGEMENT DOES

In response to our study of what management and business histories have focussed on in the past and the conventional limits associated with this, we have provided some hope and some examples of possibilities for greater and more creative engagement with history.

However, these possibilities require specific intent now, because while there are some promising signs with respect to more interest in a range of new locations, periods and angles, on current trends, it will take a long time for percentages to grow to significant levels. We will need to make an effort to think differently (to ‘fill in the gaps’ in Figures 8, 9 and 11) and create a more diverse archive that may inspire cross-pollination and creative thinking. This effort would, we argue, be well-rewarded. It could lead us to ask significant questions of what we consider worthy of attention in our field.

Inspired by Foucault and the emergent cultural turn in management history, our purpose here is to question that the Worldmapper result is simply a self-evident reflection of the objective reality of management history, to analyze and probe the nature of management history writing and to explore whether alternative historical vistas might inspire thinking innovatively in our field. We aim to highlight how the ‘amputated reality’ of management history may now be acting as a limiting ‘map for modern travellers’ in our field (Salvemini, 1939, p.60; Glassie, 1999, p.6).

We look again, at greater length and with a critical eye, on what has been conventionally assumed about those characters seen as the
mainstays in management’s evolution. We believe that decentring the way the writers and their contexts have been quickly coded, processed and subsumed into a grand historical narrative that supports conventional views of management, in order to show that their roles can be reinterpreted to inspire us in different ways, is a good first step towards rethinking management history and making it a more innovative and relevant field today. Hence, the chapters that make up the remainder of the book incorporate many of the ‘primary characters’ from management textbook histories noted in Table 1 and follow the chronological path on which they are presented in these conventional histories. But by looking deeper at each, what we glean from these elements is quite different from what you might have thought before, different from what is currently handed down to management studies and what currently bounds our view of where management comes from, what it is and what it can be.

In Chapter Two, Management’s Formation: The Importance of the Liberal Context, we delve back into the thinking of Adam Smith and look again at the relationship between management and liberalism. This investigation leads us to conclude that we would benefit from seeing management arising not with neo-liberal economics, industrial mechanization and increasing control, but social and moral liberalism and the decline of slavery, something that conventional management histories are awkwardly silent about.

Chapter Three’s investigation is titled: To What End? The Nature of Management’s Classical Approach. It looks closely at the birth of management’s ‘classical school’ and the ends that managers have traditionally sought to serve. We conclude that while the original ‘good’ of management is believed to be ‘greater efficiency’, a re-reading of the birth of management’s ‘classical’ school and the network that popularized F. W. Taylor’s ideas suggests that sustainability is management’s original good, rather than a new idea that we are only now promoting.

If social and moral liberalism provides the broader context, and the manager is the key actor in management, the site where the
manager acts is the organization. In The Birth of Organization Studies: Or What We Could Learn from Max Weber, Chapter Four, we re-examine the evolution of the ideas attributed to the person most often seen as this sub-field’s founder. We counter conventional views by arguing that Weber’s foundational insight is not that ‘bureaucracy is great’, but a contingency view that it and other forms of organization emerge out of specific cultural contexts: a view that should guard against the belief in general theories of organization and management.

Chapter Five focusses on the ‘pulpit’ from which management knowledge is generally disseminated: the formation and form of the Business School. This chapter, The Institution of the Business School, suggests that instead of aping the current form of leading business schools like Harvard, the forms that these schools could have taken if early pioneers had their way might be more inspirational today.

The Discovery of the Human Worker (Chapter Six) focusses on the character of Elton Mayo, often depicted as the first ‘good guy’ in the history of management. He is depicted as good because he discovered that people were humans and should be managed as humans rather than machines. But we question these conventions by asking what if the start of the good science in management studies turned out to be more bad (or at least based on bad science) than good?

Current views of management are now influenced by the way in which modern textbooks, which emerged with the exponential growth of business schools in the 1970s, arrange seminal ideas from previous decades into the ‘conventional narrative’. Chapter Seven, Textbook Distortions, investigates how the form of these textbooks has reconfigured the ideas of key thinkers such as Maslow, Lewin and McGregor to make them a better fit for the accepted view of the continuous progression of management.

In Chapter Eight, The Invention of Corporate Culture, we look deeper at the formation of one of the latest ‘big ideas’ to have been incorporated into management’s evolution. By uncovering the way in which the concept of corporate culture was stitched together by
a network of shared interests and specific problems, we highlight how the perspective on culture that emerged too frequently reflects a naïve and prescriptive general theory and approach to what we would like business organizations to be (rather than what they actually are).

Finally, our concluding chapter, Rethinking Management History: New Foundations for the Future, outlines a new history for management based on thinking again and decentring assumptions about key figures and institutions, what we assume about the roles they played and how these things could be thought otherwise. The final chapter presents our view of what should replace or at least sit alongside the conventional histories of management currently presented in textbooks, in order to encourage thinking differently for the future.

To begin our counter-history, we revisit the scene that Adam Smith is assumed to have set for the study of management.