Khurana, R. 2007. ***From Higher Aims to Hired Hands: The Social Transformation of American Business Schools and the Unfulfilled Promise of Management as a Profession***. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

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Read this book. Whether your BSchool involvement is as student, faculty member, or Dean, you owe it to yourself. Your sense of what you are doing will be significantly readjusted as you follow along Khurana's analysis of how US business schools came to be what they are today. The wider public also needs to know this as they wonder about current corporate and top management behavior. Khurana has given us a superb analysis of why we need to breathe new life into our BSchools, especially vital now the US model is becoming the standard around the globe - even as US students' and US recruiters' appetites seem to be hesitating or possibly declining. To say this is to assert BSchools are important - recalling Hambrick's provocative 1993 conjecture that our doings might not be (Hambrick, 1994). Believing in our importance is one thing, demonstrating it quite another and impossible without what Khurana brings us. While he does not deal with what some see as the fundamental question, i.e. whether the individual or social return to management education is adequate (e.g. Pfeffer & Fong, 2002), he does something different and thereby gives our field one of its most provocative texts since the 1959 Foundation Reports transformed our profession (Gordon & Howell, 1959; Pierson & Finberg, 1960; Pierson & Others, 1959). In brief, his historical and institutional approach surfaces much of what we take for granted and, lifting the dead hand of the past from our shoulder, helps us open up questions we have great difficulty in framing such as 'What kind of management can be taught? Should it be in universities? Does it require an explicit ethical position?' How can we set the future course of our profession without addressing these fundamental questions?

Khurana's strategy positions him firmly outside the stream of BSchool criticisms stretching, to speak only of the recent past, from Livingston's '*Myth of the Well-Educated Manager*' (Livingston, 1971) to Mintzberg's '*Managers not MBAs*' (Mintzberg, 2004) and Bennis & O'Toole's '*How Business Schools Lost Their Way*' (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). These critics, in their different ways, argued passionately that BSchools are failing to live up to their potential, but in so doing implicitly assumed management education could or should deliver value individually and/or nationally. Even Hayes & Abernathy's startling '*Managing our Way to Economic Decline*' (Hayes & Abernathy, 1980) was not so radical as to suggest the entire BSchool agenda was flawed. Khurana digs deeper with seemingly artless efficiency, taking little for granted. The result is provocative at every level - from student selection to curriculum choice to university governance to corporate recruitment to national educational policy. *Inter alia*, if students ever needed a compelling demonstration of how the historical method can supplement the quantification and hypothesis-testing that now defines 'research methods' this is one of the finest.

This review has three objectives. First, to present the book's principal themes; second, to critique Khurana's treatment; third, to endorse how, even without signing on to Khurana's agenda, his work helps us regain a strategic grasp of management education that seems to have slipped over the last hundred years. So what is Khurana's story? It begins at the end of the 19th century. The Wharton school, founded in 1881 as the first 'university-based' business school, was followed in 1898 by business schools at Chicago and Berkeley, and by 1913 twenty-five universities had established them. This growth continued and by 1924 some 400 colleges and universities were offering business degrees. Khurana does not ignore the larger number of commercial business schools already in business, such as the Bryant & Stratton, Eastman or Packard schools. Driving both sectors was the rapid expansion of industrial activity that tipped the economy from agriculture, lumber and mining and into manufacturing, with its more complex organization and resulting appetite for managers. Khurana enriches this commonplace explanation for the university schools' success with an avowedly 'institutional' analysis of four supporting factors as an explanatory ring around this growth. First, the development of 'organizational society'; second, the rising status of those whose function it was to manage organizations; third, the rapid expansion of university education; and fourthly, the intervention of individuals like Wharton and Tuck, and like-minded philanthropic foundations. This analysis would be interesting enough on its own, especially to explain the competitive plays between the for-profit and university schools, but is further elaborated by Khurana's analysis of the societal and institutional situation of which the four factors are manifestations. Between 1870 and 1920 US society was transformed and the university-based business schools were just one of the mechanisms - of special interest to us but not necessarily major for historians of that time.

The nub of Khurana's wider analysis is less an explicit theory of education-driven socioeconomic progress, and the university-based schools' part in it, than the concept of professionalization. His definition is far from naïve, grounded in the work of Larson, Abbott, Freidson and, especially, Paul Starr's '*The Social Transformation of American Medicine*' (Starr, 1982), which title Khurana's adopts as his own sub-title. The basic idea is familiar; a profession comprises a group of people whose everyday practice is grounded in an evaluated body of practical knowledge into which substantial training is required. Access to practice is controlled by examination, licensing, or other means by which the profession's members police incomers and their grasp of the legitimated knowledge. Significantly, as we shall see, Khurana argues a profession is also a 'social institution' in that it attaches meanings to its practices beyond their mere instrumental consequences, teeth pulled, accounts prepared, cases argued, and so forth. There are standards or codes of practice, oversights and sanctions (such as ejection from the profession and denial of the individual's right to practice), the whole infused with a sense of duty and ethic directed, perhaps, toward individual clients, the public good, or an authority such as the High Court. The controls are generally exercised through a formal professional body, institutionalizing the powers established

members have over novices, aspiring members and the general public, whose regard becomes a sacred trust. Khurana brings the rising demand for managers together with their own developing need to be treated as professionals, on a par with the established pre-industrial professions of law, medicine, and so forth, thus framing the business schools as part of a 'professionalization project' undertaken by a small coterie of forward-looking business people, scholars and university Presidents in the 1880 - 1920 period. The intention being that managers would be trained rather than self-made chancers, collectively monitored, conscious of their social place and moral duties, and the public would get to understand and respect what managers were doing hidden in their offices. Thereby the considerable turmoil of the period - technological, political, and in the labor force and the financial markets - would be quelled and a new industry-based socio-economic order would arise. Thus Khurana links professionalization and institutionalization directly to the higher aim of a new social order.

This professionalization project implied convergent moves, (a) the formulation of a body of managerial knowledge and (b) its legitimation against the standards then newly institutionalized into the US university system. Thus the 'invention' of the university-based school called for the complementary invention of a 'science' of management for, by the end of the nineteenth century, the natural sciences had seized the university high ground, establishing their standards of theorizing and experiment as those against which all knowledge claims should be tested. With considerable skill Khurana skirts the obvious risks of claiming management as a science, thus avoiding the bottomless rigor-relevance debate. Instead he focuses on the process of institutionalizing business research, substituting the university's acceptance of the research-ability of business for the body of science that such research was intended to produce. He does this against the background of the period's many other university-based 'professionalization projects', drawing on Wilensky's analysis of the proliferation of professional institutions during this 'golden age of professionalism' (Wilensky, 1964). Noting the national turn towards science following the 1862 Morrill Act and its aspirations to improve agricultural science, and the influence of the German research university after the return of those forced to Germany to gain their PhDs, not available in the US until after 1875 and the founding of Johns Hopkins, Khurana positions the managerial professionalization project in the wider evolution of secular grounds for social order. He covers the emergence of Taylor's Scientific Management, a sort of engineering-based proto-science, and Mayo's psychology-based 'human relations' movement. They comprised a new core of organizational theorizing that converged with the traditional accounting, finance, economics, statistics, law and English courses as a new business curriculum focused on the instrumental aspects of managing.

This is the point at which Khurana's underlying thesis becomes fully visible. The tipping point that reveals all, he argues, is when the development of managerial expertise begins to 'crowd out' the managerial profession's higher ethical aims - thus his title, 'from higher aims to hired hands' and 'unfulfilled promise'. He reviews Chandler's analysis of the US economy's transition as moving from an institutionalized owner-

based management combining personal profit with public duty, paralleling science's higher ethos, to 'managerial capitalism', wherein managers become the owners' hired hands, deploying their professional knowledge in ways that are increasingly directed towards the owners' narrower personal interests and against those of the public. The ethical dimension presupposed in the 'professionalization project' is threatened. Offering a wealth of detail, Khurana argues these threats became ever more severe after WWII, given the respect in which science and quantitative analysis were then held. He reveals the aggressiveness with which Lee Bach, founding Dean of the Carnegie Institute of Technology's business school, and HBS Dean Donald David deployed these post-war views first to convince the Ford and Carnegie Foundations to analyze the state of management education and then hugely support its total transformation into a science-based activity. It is impossible to overstate the importance of this analysis for its impact resonates through our syllabi, journals, and hiring and tenure processes. As if this were not bad enough, Khurana concludes by focusing on the subsequent shift from managerial capitalism to 'investor capitalism'; a result, he argues, of the revolution in microeconomics that brought forth 'agency theory' and ultimately delegitimized managerial authority. The last vestiges of the professionalization project's originating ethos were trashed as management educators embraced the market as the final arbiter of educational quality - the rankings, recruiters' practices, students' choices, donors' giving, and so forth - goosed up by faculty pay scales and consulting opportunities which left all but the medical schools trailing jealously behind as the BSchools' massive endowments and gifts were transformed into glittering buildings and facilities.

Many readers will be surprised to discover who Khurana, as the Agatha Christie behind this story, fingers as the villain - the AACSB. His argument is that the association was formed in 1916 by representatives of the sixteen leading US schools to help articulate realistic standards of curriculum and teaching that could realize the less tangible aspects of the professionalization project and so carry it to the next level. But they failed repeatedly to fill the role so obviously filled by the comparable institutions in the medical, legal, accounting, engineering, and so on professions. Not only did the AACSB fail to establish a standard curriculum or break the individual school's hold over recruitment and promotion and thus over who was able to teach or do research, the AACSB also failed to 'discipline' the weaker BSchools, choosing expansion post WWII over criticism and quality. Indeed Khurana argues the AACSB, representing only the elite schools, became trapped into silence for fear of devaluing the education purveyed by the far more numerous 'unaccredited' schools whose curriculum, by then, was more or less identical to that of the elite. With the passage of the post-WWII GI Bill and the huge number of BSchool students it generated, AACSB accreditation shifted from management education's own standards, such as existed, to the standards set by the Bill itself. The continuing failure of the AACSB to fulfill its role as the managers' professional institution lies at the root of the BSchool's unfulfilled promise. It failed to protect the emerging professional project from special interests, be they of universities greedy for more albeit poorer-quality students, the Foundations and their pseudo-scientific vision of what management

education should become, or the market-place of journalistic ratings and non-professional opinion. This prolonged failure, stretching from almost the beginnings of the professionalization project to the present day, sets the arc of Khurana's book. To quote from p.7; "in the course of this history, the logic of professionalism that underlay the university-based business school in its formative phase was replaced first by a managerialist logic that emphasized professional knowledge rather than professional ideals, and ultimately by a market logic that, taken to its conclusion, subverts the logic of professionalism altogether".

No question Khurana gives us the historical appreciation we need to break out of the aimless rigor and relevance debate, out of any belief that tinkering with the curriculum will deal with its critics, out of ignoring the tension between the growth of business education and the continued lack of mandatory credential for those engaging in business. Khurana takes us to the heart of the tension between the ethics of education and the ethics of management. This is the good news, and no one engaging these debates in the future can leave Khurana's book unread for there is nothing else available which so precisely positions these questions in a carefully researched and documented history. The bad news is that Khurana suffers, as all historians must, from the paradox that their intuitions precede their evaluation, having a major impact on the evidence they bring to bear versus that which they ignore or suppress. Khurana's book has already received much attention, some slightly baffled at how it fits into the tradition of BSchool criticism, some directly critical of what he has tried to do. Following an NPR radio interview with Khurana, Ed Roberts, a redoubtable MIT veteran, tartly commented "Khurana invented the whole 'professionalization project' story". Indeed there is little evidence that the individual BSchool-inventing universities saw themselves as engaged in such a collective project for there was then, and remains now, a surprising lack of interest in what other schools were doing. Most were focused on their own backyards and local needs, typically moved by local public figures, politicians, academics or businessmen.

Academics have their own ways of sniping and offering so many details Khurana will surely experience much from those who find factual and interpretive errors, oversights, omissions, and so forth in his book. Clearly his work benefits enormously from his having the world's most copious management education resources and powerful research support at his disposal (HBS and the Baker Library, duly acknowledged). There is much newly revealed for those intrigued by the accidents and details that shape history. For instance Khurana solves the puzzle of how Wallace Donham, arguably the Dean who most significantly shaped HBS, was able to tempt Elton Mayo away from Yale and thereby transform both HBS and management theorizing world-wide. Likewise he reveals the politicking in the background to the 1959 Foundation Reports. Thus it is remarkable Khurana's dream-team overlooked a book entitled '*Business Management as a Profession*', published by the same A. W. Shaw whose generosity led to the Harvard Business Review, arguably more important to management's professionalization than the AACSB, whose firm became McGraw-Hill and the publisher of the Business Week ratings we suffer (Metcalf, 1927). This volume, published before the Depression and WWII pulled the rug from under the

‘professionalization project’, comprises contributions by Henry Dennison (Bostonian industrialist, reformer, Taylor Society member, colleague of Mary P. Follett and employer of and co-author with JK Galbraith), Follett, Harlow Person (collaborator with Fred Taylor and later Dean at Tuck), and Donham. In it we find most of the arguments we need to address today’s BSchool challenges. Person’s discussion of the possibilities for business as a profession goes to the heart of Khurana’s argument i.e. that the ethos of personal gain is part of an economic system we do not fully understand but nonetheless seems opposed to that of professional service to the community. Thus Khurana misses what is already present for Person, what we might now call radical doubt about whether market forces, as articulated in investor capitalism, can ever be converge with the social good, so driving a wedge between the managerial and economic ‘sciences’. Person also served the government in Washington during WWI and observed that previously successful businessmen - seconded like himself - seldom achieved much, while inexperienced younger men frequently adapted more quickly and fully to the new circumstances of a centralized economy, which led him to doubt whether there were any scientific ‘covering laws of business’ to discover, learn or apply.

Khurana’s generous treatment offers many hostages to fortune but at least two threaten the integrity of his analysis. The first is his team’s seeming ignorance of the prior development of business education in Europe, especially in Germany, in spite of Harvard’s own contributions to this literature. Fritz Redlich, the German-born historian Arthur Cole brought to Harvard and his Research Center in Entrepreneurial History in 1950, and who moved into HBS when the Center closed in 1958, wrote extensively about the German Cameralist schools of administration (e.g. Redlich, 1957). This is more than an academic oversight since both Edwin Gay, HBS’s founding Dean, and Edmund James, the shaper of Joseph Wharton’s school, as well as those at the Universities of Chicago and Illinois, studied at these German university-based schools and naturally brought that experience to bear when they returned to pioneer the US university-based schools (Spender, 2007). Likewise Joseph Wharton, who spoke and read German, visited these schools and was much impressed they had ‘put administration onto a scientific basis’ (Sass, 1982). Only by grasping this Cameralist tradition, its sense of duty clearly directed towards the German State, can one puzzle out how the ethos of US management education became unmoored and open to being deployed towards other ends.

The second threat to Khurana’s analysis is especially surprising given his overtly institutional approach. For some undisclosed reason he seems to have overlooked the university itself as an institution capable of shaping its business school. If this is admitted it adds a fifth factor to the ring of four previously mentioned. The timing of Metcalf’s book is suggestive here, supported by other literature such as Aubrey Smith’s story of the beginnings of the business curriculum at the University of Texas in 1912 (Aubrey Smith, 1962). Aubrey Smith’s story, paralleled in similar documents among the other early movers, and in the correspondence of Eliot (the Harvard President who brought HBS into existence) is that business

education began as part of each university's desire to serve their local business community (Cruikshank, 1987). Here we confront the novelty of the US concept of university education which synthesized a quintessentially American pragmatic approach to useful knowledge with the older teaching traditions of Oxbridge and the research practices of the German university; thus the familiar trinity of research, teaching and service. Without this notion of local service we cannot explain why Joseph Wharton, whose interest in non-professional education led him to found Swarthmore College in 1869, a decade before his business school, or any of the other donors like Tuck or Baker, would spend their money in the way they did.

The distinction between local service and the national professionalization project may seem a bit like academic minutiae until we pay closer attention to what was happening in US universities at the time. They were in turmoil. This is a huge topic but we might fairly say the underlying issue was the shift from religion, specifically Protestantism, as their anchoring ethos, to 'science' (Marsden, 1994). Eliot himself was in the forefront of scientism and became involved in a public dispute over the training of clergy with McCosh, the President of Princeton - even today without a BSchool. Other reactions to the shift left problems still unresolved. Nock, in his rousing 1931 lectures on the state of the US universities, argued they had abandoned their fundamental mission as they shifted from 'education' to 'training' (Nock, 2007). Likewise Khurana reports the tensions between the BSchools and the rest of the university which we know well still exist. Thus it seems highly probable that having set up the business school for local reasons, based on the notion of service to the local community, those in the BSchool realized they had to deal with their university's internal politics if they were to survive, let alone prosper. Most sought to legitimize management by putting it on a scientific basis, just as the Cameralist schools had done a century before, and to frame this impulse as a matter of professionalization, shifting from a State-oriented Cameralist reasoning to one pragmatically adapted to the US's rising private sector. We can argue the 'professionalization project' described in Metcalf's book followed rather than preceded the founding of the early schools. Again this is no mere historical nicety, for if correct it undermines Khurana's whole effort since the ethos of humanitarian service which he presumes initially defined the management profession had not been abandoned. It was never present. Neither the BSchools nor the AACSB can be held accountable for its loss and the unfulfilled promise that management would, or could, ever become a profession.

Ironically Khurana's lack of concern with the university as an institutional factor forces us to dig deeper into the present condition of the BSchools, leveraging the fine strategic insights his book provides. Paralleling the literature criticizing business education is a much larger literature on our universities' problems. From a highly informed position, Derek Bok (twice President of Harvard and the author of a penetrating assessment of HBS in 1978) warned of the corrosive influence of market forces and the continuing commercialization of higher education (Bok, 2003; Washburn, 2005). In this literature,

summarized in Cole, Barber and Graubard's volume (Cole, Barber, & Graubard, 1994), the business schools are all but ignored small-fry, seeming to support Hambrick's conjecture of their irrelevance even within academe. There are at least two explanations for the university leaders' larger anxieties, confirming the concerns Nock framed so eloquently. First there is funding. The expansion of higher education resulted in enterprises of enormous size and complexity with prodigious financing and administrative needs. These, in turn, forced universities to focus on delivering measureable services at the expense of their less tangible contributions through teaching and research. Research, in turn, became less important as the means to add to the stock of human knowledge and more important, via its impact on reputation, as the means to raise funds. World War II and the Cold War pressed the universities into the nation's service as deliverers of Vannevar Bush's vision at the expense of education in Nock's sense. With the post Cold War disappearance of massive Federal support, the universities turned to the private sector, the pharmaceutical and computing companies, and so forth.

Second, the corrupting temptations of Defense and industrial funding (and the sports franchises) are not the modern universities' only problem. Many recent commentators, such as London (London, 1993) or Searle (Searle, 1994), argue that even more serious than the unresolved tensions between the US university's Protestant heritage and the secular tendencies of the sciences are those between positivism, as the philosophical basis for a rigorous scientific approach, and the post-positivist post-modern pluralistic philosophies emerging from postwar Europe. If relativism rules and the function of scholarship is to attack and deconstruct the existing body of human knowledge, the center cannot hold and the whole university project is threatened. This has the odd effect of making the practice-based professional schools the most stable parts of the university, for even the most rabid anti-positivist may eventually appreciate what medical science delivers. But here again the BSchools occupy a curious position, for what they ultimately deliver is in doubt. We can certainly imagine the BSchool graduates would seem less attractive were they breathing Foucault and Derrida over the recruiters, but why then do so many firms now seek liberal arts graduates, finding them of more flexible mind than MBAs? The BSchools' managerialism aside, while hewing to the positivist notion of science they evidence few of the temptations to re-shape their science towards the immediate interests of those able to provide funding as, for instance, some pharmaceutical firms are charged with re-shaping the medical school's science - further supporting Hambrick's conjecture that the science produced in BSchools has no great commercial value. Likewise the funding BSchools receive is largely from people already rich enough to build glittering memorials to themselves, people no longer focused on making money out of new science. This too might help explain why the BSchools have not been as disrupted by the Continental critique as the rest of the nation's campuses. Indeed the BSchools may be that last resting place where positivism rules in irrelevance and happy detachment from the commercial or political interests of those with the power to disturb its slumbers.

What, then, is to be done? Khurana calls for BSchools to disengage themselves from the market forces of investor capitalism and critically assess the global business situation using alternative models which balance multiple interests. He speaks of the loss of that grand originating narrative that placed professionalized managers at the hinge between those engaged in business and our broader social needs, this loss evident in the inchoate drift that characterizes management education today. The resulting loss of intellectual authority evacuated the faculty's moral authority and, with that, wiped out any contribution to social order in our capitalist democracy. Thus he sees the need to reverse the current obeisance to market forces and recover our belief in hierarchy and community and thereby our sense of duty and ethics. What are we to make of this Toquevillian nostalgia? The facts are that local market forces, not a grand narrative, brought the US BSchools into existence and drove their amazing growth. At no time was the AACSB chartered to resist these market forces in the pursuit of some Nockian educational excellence. Rather to the contrary, by policing and now advising, the AACSB sought to rationalize the BSchools' products and processes and make them more comprehensible and marketable. Even the BSchools' severest critics have to reckon with the fact that there is a huge and growing global market for our students. Can our customers still be mistaken after a century of activity? Why, of all the institutions that shape the BSchools would we deny the economy itself, i.e. the students' employers, as the most legitimate? If it sells in a reasonably competitive market it must be good, and who is Khurana, or any other commentator, so tell us otherwise?

At issue here is the kind of moral outrage at what goes on in BSchools that energizes critics such as Mintzberg, Ghoshal, Grey, Pfeffer and Locke. Khurana has a special vantage point here for he is one of a fellowship of increasingly influential management scholars of Indian heritage who, drawing on a their cultural background, find problematic much of what US scholars take for granted (Crainer & Dearlove, 2005). This sense of moral outrage, superbly moderated, is the driving subtext of Khurana's book and it must bring anyone who reads it to a new place. His scholarship and research is so careful and extensive his suggestions cannot be dismissed, as those of so many of the angrier critics can, as over-the-top expostulation. They are precisely the kind of academically substantial analyses that demand attention. But is this needed? Do BSchools matter enough? Khurana's argument that the professionalization of management is crucial to global social order is obviously a stretch, presumed rather than substantiated, especially given the long history of war as an ever-popular mode of economic competition.

This reviewer would offer a different but supporting reasoning; that without better managers, there can be no better organizations, and that without better organizations there can be no better world - for the limits to our ability to organize are the limits to our ability to shape the human condition. Better global markets alone cannot save us for while we have certainly wrought massive destruction by pitting our organizations against each other we are beginning to face up to the plurality of boundaries to our condition and so to the urgent need to manage them effectively if we are to ensure our survival. This is a global project that

calls for a new professional ethos, no question. Whether the BSchools, and the private sectors they serve, are to have a hand in creating and delivering it is, of course, for us to decide - and Khurana's work is a huge contribution to this discussion. Read this book.

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